DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 648

[I.D. 071999A]

New England Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Public meeting.

SUMMARY: The New England Fishery Management Council (Council) will hold a 2-day public meeting on August 10–11, 1999, to consider actions affecting New England fisheries in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ).

DATES: The meeting will be held on Tuesday, August 10, 1999, at 9:30 a.m. and on Wednesday, August 11, 1999, at 8:30 a.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Sheraton Four Points Hotel, Route 132 and Bearse's Way, Hyannis, MA 02601; telephone (508) 771–3000. Requests for special accommodations should be addressed to the New England Fishery Management Council, 5 Broadway, Saugus, MA 01906–1036; telephone: (781) 231–0422.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Paul J. Howard, Executive Director, New England Fishery Management Council (781) 231–0422.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Tuesday, August 10, 1999

The meeting will begin with an advisory report from the Northeast Fisheries Science Center on the status of sea scallops and witch flounder and updated assessments of all multispecies finfish, including 10-year rebuilding projections. During the afternoon session the Groundfish Committee will ask the Council to consider approval of initial action on a framework adjustment to the Northeast Multispecies Fishery Management Plan (FMP) to modify the Gulf of Maine cod fishery management program to address the 1999 cod discard problem and implement management measures for the 2000–2001 fishing year. A measure would also be included that would modify the mechanism in Georges Bank cod trip limit program (currently under NMFS review in Framework Adjustment 30 to the FMP) that provides authority to the Administrator, Northeast Region, NMFS (Regional Administrator) to reduce the trip limit based on an evaluation of the risk of exceeding the annual catch target. The Groundfish Committee report also will include recommendations for measures to be considered in the development of Amendment 13 to the FMP. The process to identify specific management options will occur between now and the November Council meeting.

Wednesday, August 11, 1999

As the first agenda item, the Council will elect its 1999–2000 officers. Reports will follow from the Council Chairman, Executive Director, the NMFS Regional Administrator, Northeast Fisheries Science Center and Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council liaisons, and representatives of the Coast Guard, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Enforcement Committee will ask for approval of the enforcement guidelines developed for Council use during the selection of measures to be included in fishery management plans. The Enforcement Report will conclude with an update by NOAA General Counsel on the status of civil penalty cases in the Northeast. During the afternoon portion of the meeting the Interspecies Committee will ask the Council to consider approval of a control date to apply to the use of days-at-sea (DAS) allocated through the Northeast Multispecies, Sea Scallop, and Monkfish FMPs. Fishing effort which occurs after publication of the control date may be treated differently than fishing effort expended prior to that date if the Council chooses to constrain future DAS usage based on more recent levels of use. The meeting will adjourn after the Council addresses any other outstanding business.

Although other issues not contained in this agenda may come before this Council for discussion, in accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, those issues may not be the subject of formal Council action during this meeting. Council action will be restricted to those issues specifically listed in this notice.

Special Accommodations

This meeting is accessible to people with physical disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Paul J. Howard (see **ADDRESSES**) at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

Dated: July 21, 1999.

Gary C. Matlock,

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

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