identify and designate certain areas of the marine environment which are of special national significance as National Marine Sanctuaries, and provides authority for comprehensive and coordinated conservation and management of these marine areas, and activities affecting them, in a manner that complements existing regulatory authorities. Further, section 312 of the NMSA provides that any person who destroys, causes the loss of, or injures any sanctuary resource is liable to the United States for response costs and damages. Monies received are used to reimburse the Secretary for response actions and damage assessments and to fund the restoration, replacement, or acquisition of the equivalent of injured, destroyed, or lost Sanctuary resources.

As a part of its mission to protect and manage the ecological, historical, educational, recreational, and aesthetic qualities of the National Marine Sanctuaries, MSD will prepare a Reef Restoration PEIS. It is MSD's intent to prepare this PEIS such that a tiered process can be used in the preparation of future environmental documents concerning restoration actions within National Marine Sanctuaries. The PEIS, among other things, will set forth methodologies and guidelines for restoration actions arising out of injuries to sanctuary resources. Accordingly, the PEIS will facilitate the development of both subsequent environmental assessments (EAs) and individual restoration plans designed to restore sanctuary resources.

MSD intends to hold a public scoping meeting prior to the preparation of the Draft PEIS for those persons and/or organizations interested in the development of the Draft PEIS. MSD will also hold a public meeting, which will be held concurrent with the public comment period to accept comments on the Draft PEIS. Notice of these meetings will be published in the **Federal Register**. All substantive comments provided, both written and oral, at the public meeting, will be considered in the preparation of the Final PEIS and will become part of the public record (i.e., names, addresses, letters of comment, comment provided during public meetings).

Comments and suggestions are invited from all interested parties to ensure that the full range of issues related to this proposed action and all significant issues are identified. Comments and/or questions concerning the preparation of this PEIS should be directed to the MSD at the address or phone listed above.

Dated: February 11, 2000.

Capt. Ted Lillestolen,

Deputy Assistant Administrator for Ocean Services and Coastal Zone Management.

[FR Doc. 00–3771 Filed 2–16–00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–08–M

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 012100B]

Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act Provisions; Essential Fish Habitat General Concurrence

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

ACTION: Notice of availability; request for comments.

SUMMARY: NMFS requests public comments on a proposed essential fish habitat (EFH) General Concurrence with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District (COE). The proposed General Concurrence was prepared by NMFS to provide for expedited review of certain COE regulatory actions that may no more than minimally adversely affect EFH, and for which no further consultation is generally required.

DATES: Comments must be received at the appropriate address or fax number (See **ADDRESSES**) no later than 5:00 p.m. eastern standard time on March 3, 2000.

ADDRESSES: Comments should be submitted to Lou Chiarella, NMFS Northeast Region EFH Coordinator, One Blackburn Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930, telephone 978–281–9277, e-mail *lou.chiarella@noaa.gov*. Comments may be submitted via facsimile (fax) to 978–281–9301. Comments will not be accepted if submitted via e-mail or internet. Copies of the proposed General Concurrence may be obtained from the same address. The proposed General Concurrence is also accessible via the internet at http://www.nero.nmfs.gov/ro/doc/hcd/htm.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Lou Chiarella, NMFS Northeast Region EFH Coordinator, 978–281–9277, e-mail *lou.chiarella@noaa.gov*.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act) (16 U.S.C. 1855(b)(2)) requires Federal agencies to consult with the Secretary of Commerce regarding any action or proposed action authorized, funded, or undertaken by the agency that may adversely affect EFH. EFH has been identified by regional fishery management councils pursuant to section 303(a)(7) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act (16 U.S.C. 1853(a)(7)). EFH is defined as ''those waters and substrate necessary to fish for spawning, breeding, feeding or growth to maturity.'' Consultations are governed by the EFH regulations at 50 CFR 600.920. The regulations identify five options for carrying out EFH consultations: use of existing environmental review procedures, General Concurrence, programmatic consultation, abbreviated consultation, and expanded consultation.

General Concurrences are developed by NMFS in coordination with a Federal agency to identify specific types of Federal actions that may adversely affect EFH, but for which no further consultation is generally required because NMFS has determined that the actions will likely result in no more than minimal adverse effects to EFH individually and cumulatively.

For actions to qualify for a General Concurrence, the EFH regulations at 50 CFR 600.920(f)(2) require that the actions meet all of the following criteria: (1) the actions must be similar in nature and similar in their impact on EFH; (2) the actions must not cause greater than minimal adverse effects on EFH when implemented individually; and (3) the actions must not cause greater than minimal cumulative adverse effects on EFH. NMFS prepared the proposed General Concurrence with the COE for activities governed by state programmatic general permits (PGPs) in New England.

State PGPs are COE permits developed pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1344), Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act (33 U.S.C. 403) and/or Section 103 of the Marine Protection, Research and Sanctuaries Act (33 U.S.C. 1413) for activities that result in minimal environmental impacts. PGPs are issued by the COE for a term of 5 years. PGPs for the New England states include two categories of activities. Category I activities are those with minimal impacts that do not require further authorization by the COE. Since no COE authorization is needed after issuance of the PGP, no Federal action occurs that would trigger the requirement for an EFH consultation for individual Category I activities. Examples of Category I activities covered by these PGPs include certain temporary buoys, Coast Guard approved aids to navigation, and single boat moorings not associated with any boating facility. Category II activities require COE review

and written authorization, and therefore require EFH consultation if they may adversely affect EFH. The proposed General Concurrence would fulfill the EFH consultation requirement for these activities. Examples of Category II activities include minor maintenance dredging and installation of certain recreational docks and piers. The COE solicits comments on the appropriate categorization of activities covered by PGPs prior to reissuing each PGP, and at that time would be required to conduct a separate EFH consultation with NMFS on the anticipated effects of issuing each PGP.

The actions that would be covered by the proposed General Concurrence include all activities listed as Category II within PGPs issued by the COE for Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut. Pursuant to 50 CFR 600.920(f)(4), NMFS would request notification in advance of COE authorization of Category II activities so that NMFS can make a case-by-case determination on the applicability of this General Concurrence. Those actions that NMFS determines would result in more than minimal adverse effects to EFH would require individual EFH consultation and would not be covered by this General Concurrence. Although NMFS would continue to review all Category II actions, as it does presently, the General Concurrence would result in workload savings for NMFS and the COE for actions with no more than minimal adverse effects to EFH individually and cumulatively. For such actions, the General Concurrence would obviate the need for NMFS to provide EFH Conservation Recommendations and for the COE to provide written responses to those recommendations.

NMFS has coordinated with the New England, Mid-Atlantic, and South Atlantic Fishery Management Councils regarding the development of the proposed General Concurrence. NMFS discussed the proposed General Concurrence with the New England and Mid-Atlantic Councils during public meetings, which afforded an opportunity for public review as required by 50 CFR 600.920(f)(5). However, since the published agendas for these meetings did not include a clear description of the scope and purpose of the proposed General Concurrence, NMFS is publishing this notice to allow an additional opportunity for public review.

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

Dated: February 11, 2000.

Andrew J. Kemmerer,

Director, Office of Habitat Conservation, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 00–3857 Filed 2–16–00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–22–F

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 020900A]

Pacific Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: The Pacific Fishery Management Council's (Council) Highly Migratory Species Plan Development Team (HMSPDT) will hold a work session which is open to the public.

DATES: The work session will be held on Monday, March 13, 2000, from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.; on Tuesday, March 14, 2000, from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; and on Wednesday, March 15, 2000, from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The work session will be held at the Holiday Inn Sea-Tac, Laguardia Room, 17338 International Blvd., Seattle, WA, 98188. Phone: 206–248–1000; Fax: 206–242–7089.

Council address: Pacific Fishery Management Council, 2130 SW Fifth Avenue, Suite 224, Portland, OR 97201.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dan Waldeck, Pacific Fishery Management Council, 503–326–6352.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The primary purpose of the work session is to prepare and review draft sections of the fishery management plan (FMP) for highly migratory species (HMS) and related documents for HMS fisheries off the West Coast.

Management measures that may be adopted in the FMP for HMS fisheries off the West Coast include permit and reporting requirements for commercial and recreational harvest of HMS resources, time and/or area closures to minimize gear conflicts or bycatch, adoption or confirmation of state regulations for HMS fisheries, and allocations of some species to non-commercial use. The FMP is likely to include a framework management process to add future new measures, including the potential for collaborative management efforts with other regional fishery management councils with interest in HMS resources. It would also include essential fish habitat and habitat areas of particular concern, including fishing and non-fishing threats, as well as other components of FMPs required under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act).

The proposed FMP and its associated environmental impact statement would be the Council's fourth FMP for the exclusive economic zone off the West Coast. Development of the FMP is timely, considering the new mandates under the Magnuson-Stevens Act, efforts by the United Nations to promote conservation and management of HMS resources through domestic and international programs, and the increased scope of activity of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission in HMS fisheries in the eastern Pacific Ocean.

Comments regarding the draft FMP will not be accepted if sent via the e-mail or the Internet.

Although non-emergency issues not contained in the HSMPDT meeting agenda may come before the HMSPDT for discussion, those issues may not be the subject of formal HMSPDT action during these meetings. HMSPDT action will be restricted to those issues specifically listed in this document and any issues arising after publication of this document that require emergency action under section 305(c) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, provided the public has been notified of the HMSPDT's intent to take final action to address the emergency.

Special Accommodations

The meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Mr. John Rhoton at 503–326–6352 at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

Dated: February 9, 2000.

Bruce C. Morehead,

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

[FR Doc. 00–3859 Filed 2–16–00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–22–F

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Patent and Trademark Office

Grant of Certificate of Interim Extension of the Term of U.S. Patent No. 4,229,449; roboxetine mesylate

AGENCY: Patent and Trademark Office, Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of Interim Patent Term Extension.