DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648–XA111

Notice of Availability of a Draft Framework for Ranking the Relative Importance of Puget Sound Chinook Salmon Populations and Watersheds for ESU Recovery and Delisting

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

ACTION: Notice; reopening of comment period.

SUMMARY: NMFS is reopening the comment period for a draft technical framework for ranking recovery potential of populations of Puget Sound Chinook salmon and watersheds supporting them. The comment period is being reopened to provide additional opportunity for public comment.

DATES: Information and comments on the draft framework must be received at the appropriate address or fax number (see ADDRESSES), no later than 5 p.m. on February 22, 2011. We encourage the public’s involvement in reviewing this framework.

ADDRESSES: Information and comments on this draft framework should be submitted to Garth Griffin, Chief, Protected Resources Division, NMFS. Comments may also be sent via facsimile (fax) to (503) 230–5435 or by e-mail. The framework document is also available on the Internet at http://www.nwr.noaa.gov/Salmon-Recovery-Planning/Recovery-Domains/Puget-Sound/PS-Chinook-Plan.cfm.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Elizabeth Babcock, NMFS, Northwest Region, (206) 526–4505.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Reopening of Comment Period

The comment period will be reopened through February 22, 2011.

Background

NMFS published a document in the Federal Register of December 29, 2010, concerning the availability for public comment of the proposed evaluation of the Secretary of Commerce (Secretary) as to how the Puget Sound Chinook Resource Management Plan (RMP) addresses the criteria in Limit 6 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) 4(d) Rule. The comment period for this action ended Friday, January 28, 2011. The comment period is being reopened to provide additional opportunity for public comment. The Puget Sound Treaty Tribes and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife submitted to NMFS, pursuant to the protective regulations promulgated for Puget Sound Chinook salmon under Limit 6 of the ESA 4(d) Rule for salmon and steelhead, a jointly developed RMP. The RMP specifies the future management of commercial, recreational, subsistence and tribal salmon fisheries potentially affecting listed Puget Sound Chinook salmon.

Dated: January 31, 2011.

Therese Conant,
Acting Chief, Endangered Species Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.
interested parties; components and products of the review; and other topics.

Groundfish EFH was first identified and described by the Pacific Council in 1998, and revised in 1996. The Pacific Council considered proposed revisions to groundfish EFH in 2008, but declined to change EFH descriptions, pending the more thorough review now underway. Detailed information on existing EFH descriptions and identification is available by contacting the Pacific Council directly.

Although non-emergency issues not contained in this agenda may come before this group for discussion, those issues may not be the subject of formal action during this meeting. 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

This meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Mr. Kris Kleinschmidt at (503) 820–2280 at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

Dated: February 1, 2011.

Tracey L. Thompson,
Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:
The meetings will be held on February 22 and March 10, 2011. All meetings will be held in Pago Pago, American Samoa, except for the SSC meeting which will be held in Honolulu, HI. See SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION for specific dates and times and agendas of the several meetings.

ADDRESSES: See SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION for specific locations of the meetings.

Council address: Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council Office, 1164 Bishop Street, Suite 1400, Honolulu, HI; telephone: (808) 522–8220.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:
Kitty M. Simonds, Executive Director; telephone: (808) 522–8220.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The SSC will meet on February 22–24, 2011, between 8:30 a.m. and 5 p.m.; The American Samoa REAC will meet on March 4, 2011, between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m.; the AP will meet on March 5, 2011, between 8:30 a.m. and 5 p.m.; the PT will meet on March 7, 2011, between 8:30 a.m. and 5 p.m.; the Council’s Executive and Budget Standing Committee will meet on March 10, 2011, between 3 p.m. and 5 p.m.; the 150th Council meeting will meet on March 10, 2011, between 8:30 a.m. and 5 p.m.

The SSC meeting will be held at the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council Office, 1164 Bishop Street, Suite 1400, Honolulu, HI; telephone: (808) 522–8220. The REAC, and 150th Council meetings will be held at the Governor H. Rex Lee Auditorium (Fale Lauimei), Department of Commerce, Government of American Samoa, Pago Pago, American Samoa; telephone: (684) 633–5155. The Council Executive and Budget Standing Committee and AP meetings will be held at Sadie’s by the Sea Hotel, Pago Pago, American Samoa; telephone: (684) 633–5981. The Council’s PT meeting will be held at the Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources, Government of American Samoa, Pago Pago, American Samoa; telephone: (684) 633–5102.

In addition to the agenda items listed here, the SSC, REAC, AP, PT and Council will hear recommendations from Council advisory groups. Public comment periods will be provided throughout the agenda. The order in which agenda items are addressed may change. The meetings will run as late as necessary to complete scheduled business.

Schedule and Agenda for 106th SSC Meeting

8:30 a.m.–5 p.m., Tuesday, February 22, 2011

1. Introductions
2. Approval of Draft Agenda and Assignment of Rapporteurs
3. Status of the 104th SSC Meeting Recommendations
4. Report from the Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center Director
5. Program Planning
   A. Annual Catch Limit (ACL) Specification Process
   B. Workshop on ACLs for Coral Reef Fisheries
   C. National ACL Science Needs Workshop
   D. Catch Shares and Communities Workshop
   E. Public Comment
   F. SSC Discussion and Recommendations
   6. Insular Fisheries
      A. Mariana Archipelago
      1. Plan Team Meetings
      2. Advisory Panel Meetings
      3. Regional Ecosystem Advisory Committee meetings
   7. Pelagic Fisheries
      A. Proposed Changes to American Samoa Large Pelagic Fishing Vessel (> 50 ft) Area Closure (Action)
      B. American Samoa Longline Limited Entry Program (Action)
      C. American Samoa and Hawaii Longline Quarterly Reports
      D. Impacts to Hawaii Longline Fleet from Western and Central Pacific Ocean Bigeye Tuna Closure
      E. International Fisheries Meetings
   8. Protected Species
      A. Updates on False Killer Whale Issues
      B. Updates on Endangered Species Act Issues
   C. American Samoa Longline Fishery Circle Hook Study