distinct population segment (DPS) as endangered under the ESA (73 FR 62919, October 22, 2008). The most recent (2014) abundance survey indicates a population of 340 Cook Inlet beluga whales that has declined 0.4 percent per year over the past ten years.

The Cook Inlet belugas are the most reproductively and demographically isolated of all the Alaskan belugas, and are unique in Alaska because their habitat, a semi-enclosed tidal estuary in southcentral Alaska, is in close proximity to most of Alaska's human population. The distribution of Cook Inlet belugas has changed significantly since the 1970s; in recent years the summer range has contracted to the upper reaches of Cook Inlet near Anchorage. This range contraction was coincident with the decline in population size.

Ten potential threat types are identified and assessed in this draft recovery plan, based on current knowledge of threat factors. Assessments were made based on the information and data gaps presented in the plan's background section. Climate change, while considered a potential threat to Cook Inlet beluga recovery, is not addressed as a separate threat, but rather is discussed with respect to how it may affect each of the listed threats. The ten identified threats were ranked in order of their relative concern (high, medium, low) to the Cook Inlet beluga population.

Due to an incomplete understanding of the threats facing Cook Inlet beluga whales, NMFS is unable to identify with certainty the actions that will most immediately encourage recovery. Until we know which threats are limiting recovery, the strategy of this recovery plan is to focus on threats identified as medium or high concern. This should focus efforts and resources on actions that are more likely to benefit Cook Inlet beluga whale recovery.

Under section 4(f)(1) of the ESA, recovery plans must contain objective, measurable criteria which, when met, would result in a determination that the species be delisted. This recovery plan contains both demographic and threats-based criteria for down- and delisting. The threat-based recovery criteria are designed to evaluate the five ESA section 4(a)(1) factors described in the ESA listing determination of the Cook Inlet belugas. The draft recovery plan proposes that Cook Inlet beluga whales may be reclassified from endangered to threatened (*i.e.,* downlisted) when all of the following have been met: (1) The abundance estimate for the Cook Inlet beluga whale DPS is greater than or equal to 520 individuals and there is 95 percent or greater probability that the 25-year population abundance trend (representative of one full generation) is positive; and (2) the 15 downlisting threats-based criteria are satisfied. The draft recovery plan proposes that the population will be considered for delisting when all of the following are met: (1) The abundance estimate for the Cook Inlet beluga whale DPS is greater than or equal to 780 individuals and there is 95 percent or greater probability that the 25-year population abundance trend (representative of one full generation) is positive; and (2) the 15 downlisting and 6 delisting threats-based criteria are satisfied.

When determining recovery actions, we aimed to improve understanding of whether a particular threat is limiting recovery and to eliminate or mitigate that threat, or to improve our understanding of, and ability to manage, that threat. The actions in this recovery plan include research, management, monitoring, and outreach efforts, since a comprehensive approach to Cook Inlet beluga whale recovery is likely to have greater success than focusing on any one type of action. There are also actions targeted at incorporating new information and conducting regular reassessments, making this recovery plan an adaptive management plan.

The total time and cost to recovery are very difficult to predict with the current information, and the total cost to recovery will be largely dependent upon the number of recovery actions requiring implementation. Since that cannot be determined prior to implementation of portions of this plan, the total cost presented assumes implementation of all recovery actions. As recovery progresses and we better understand the relationship between discrete threats and population dynamics, it may become apparent that there are some threats that need not be addressed to achieve recovery. However, we expect that recovery may take at least two generations (50 years).

If every identified recovery action is implemented, and if recovery implementation lasts for 50 years (two generations), then the estimated cost of implementing this entire recovery program would be approximately $78.3 million. Any projections of total costs over the full recovery period are likely to be imprecise, and the cost estimates do not imply that funding will necessarily be available for all Cook Inlet beluga whale recovery tasks.

NMFS requests and will consider all substantive comments and information presented during the public comment period as we finalize this Plan. NMFS concludes that the Draft Recovery Plan meets the requirements of the ESA.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*

Dated: May 11, 2015.

Angela Somma,

Chief, Endangered Species Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 2015–11700 Filed 5–14–15; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–22–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Availability of Seats for National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Councils

AGENCY: Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS), National Ocean Service (NOS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Commerce (DOC).

ACTION: Notice and request for applications.

SUMMARY: ONMS is seeking applications for vacant seats for 7 of its 13 national marine sanctuary advisory councils and for the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve Advisory Council (advisory councils). Vacant seats, including positions (*i.e.,* primary member and alternate), for each of the advisory councils are listed in this notice under **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION.** Applicants are chosen based upon their particular expertise and experience in relation to the seat for which they are applying; community and professional affiliations; views regarding the protection and management of marine or Great Lake resources; and possibly the length of residence in the area affected by the sanctuary. Applicants who are chosen as members or alternates should expect to serve two- or three year terms, pursuant to the charter of the specific national marine sanctuary advisory council or the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve Advisory Council.

DATES: Applications are due by June 30, 2015.

ADDRESSES: Application kits are specific to each advisory council. As such, application kits must be obtained from and returned to the council-specific addresses noted below.

- Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council: Michael Murray, Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary, University of California Santa Barbara, Ocean Science Education Building 514, MC 6155, Santa Barbara, CA, 93106–6155; (805) 893–

6418; email *Michael.Murray@noaa.gov;* or download application from *http://channelislands.noaa.gov/sac/council_news.html.*

• Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council: Shelley DuPuy, Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary, 4700 Avenue U, Bldg. 216, Galveston, TX 77551; (409) 621–5151 extension 106; email *Shelley.DuPuy@noaa.gov;* or download application from *http://flowergarden.noaa.gov/advisorycouncil/councilnews.html.*

• Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council: Becky Shortland, Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary, 10 Ocean Science Circle, Savannah, GA 31411; (912) 598–2381; email *Becky.Shortland@noaa.gov;* or download application from *http://graysreef.noaa.gov/management/sac/council_news.html.*

• Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council: Inouye Regional Center, ATTN: NOS/ONMS/Shannon Lyday, 1845 Wasp Blvd., Building 176, Honolulu, HI 96818; (808) 725–5905; email *Shannon.Lyday@noaa.gov;* or download application from *http://hawaiihumpbackwhale.noaa.gov/council/council_app_accepting.html.*

• Monitor National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council: Katherine Van Dam, Monitor National Marine Sanctuary, 100 Museum Drive, Newport News, VA 23606; (757) 591–7350; email *Katherine.VanDam@noaa.gov;* or download application from *http://monitor.noaa.gov.*

• National Marine Sanctuary of American Samoa Advisory Council: Joseph Paulin, National Marine Sanctuary of American Samoa, Tauese P.F. Sunia Ocean Center, P.O. Box 4318 Pago Pago, American Samoa 96799; (684) 633–6500; email *Joseph.Paulin@noaa.gov;* or download application from *http://americansamoa.noaa.gov.*

• Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council: Elizabeth Stokes, Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary, 175 Edward Foster Road, Scituate MA 02066; (781) 545–8026 extension 201; email *elizabeth.stokes@noaa.gov;* or download application from *http://stellwagen.noaa.gov/management/sac/sachome.html.*

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For further information on a particular national marine sanctuary advisory council, please contact the individual identified in the **ADDRESSES** section of this notice.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: ONMS serves as the trustee for 14 marine protected areas encompassing more than 170,000 square miles of ocean and Great Lakes waters from the Hawaiian Islands to the Florida Keys, and from Lake Huron to American Samoa. National marine sanctuaries protect our Nation's most vital coastal and marine natural and cultural resources, and through active research, management, and public engagement, sustains healthy environments that are the foundation for thriving communities and stable economies. One of the many ways ONMS ensures public participation in the designation and management of national marine sanctuaries is through the formation of advisory councils. National marine sanctuary advisory councils are community-based advisory groups established to provide advice and recommendations to the superintendents of the national marine sanctuaries on issues including management, science, service, and stewardship; and to serve as liaisons between their constituents in the community and the sanctuary. Additional information on ONMS and its advisory councils can be found at *http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov.* Information related to the purpose, policies and operational requirements for advisory councils can be found in the charter for a particular advisory council (*http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/management/ac/council_charters.html*) and the National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council Implementation Handbook (*http://www.sanctuaries.noaa.gov/management/ac/acref.html*).

The following is a list of the vacant seats, including positions (*i.e.,* primary member or alternate), for each of the advisory councils currently seeking applications for members and alternates:

Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council: Non-consumptive Recreation (primary); and Non-consumptive Recreation (alternate).

Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council: Recreational Fishing (primary).

Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council: Conservation (primary); University Education (primary); Sport Diving (primary); and Citizen-at-Large (primary).

Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council: Commercial Shipping (primary); Commercial Shipping (alternate); Hawaii County (alternate); Lanai Island (alternate); Citizen-at-Large (alternate); Education (alternate); Tourism (alternate); and Whale Watching (alternate).

Monitor National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council: Commercial and Recreational Fishing (primary).

National Marine Sanctuary of American Samoa Advisory Council: Business and Industry (primary); and Community-at-Large: Tutuila—West Side (primary).

Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council: At-Large (primary); Business Industry (primary); Diving (primary); Diving (alternate); Education (2 primary seats); Fixed Gear Commercial Fishing (primary); Fixed Gear Commercial Fishing (alternate); Mobile Gear Commercial Fishing (alternate); Recreational Fishing (alternate); Research (2 alternate seats); and Whale Watch (primary).

Authority: 16 U.S.C. Sections 1431, *et seq.* (Federal Domestic Assistance Catalog Number 11.429 Marine Sanctuary Program)

Dated: April 13, 2015.

Daniel J. Basta,

Director, Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, National Ocean Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

[FR Doc. 2015–11630 Filed 5–14–15; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–NK–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

New England Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice; public meeting.

SUMMARY: The New England Fishery Management Council (Council) is scheduling a public meeting of its Habitat Committee to consider actions affecting New England fisheries in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ). Recommendations from this group will be brought to the full Council for formal consideration and action, if appropriate.

DATES: This meeting will be held on Monday, June 1, 2015 at 9 a.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Holiday Inn, 300 Woodbury Avenue, Portsmouth, NH 03801; telephone: (603) 431–8000; fax: (603) 501–3733.

Council address: New England Fishery Management Council, 50 Water Street, Mill 2, Newburyport, MA 01950.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Thomas A. Nies, Executive Director, New England Fishery Management Council; telephone: (978) 465–0492.