

possible course for BFRL. At the time, FAST included considerably more phenomena than any other model anywhere. In addition, it used significantly more sophisticated graphics output. For these reasons, among others, FAST was selected as the engine for further development. A priority project was undertaken in 1989 to incorporate the lessons learned in the development of the structure of CCFM. This code was named CFAST¹ for the Consolidated Fire Growth and Smoke Transport Model. This is the only explicit zone fire model supported by the Building and Fire Research Laboratory. FAST was the engine in HAZARD I, versions 1.0 and 1.1, which became available in June of 1989, and September of 1991, respectively. CFAST is the basis for Hazard 1.2, which became available in 1994. CFAST is intended to operate on many platforms, be as error free as possible, be simple to run for simple problems, yet allow complexity where needed. The code is extremely fast. It works on laptop personal computers, Unix workstations and supercomputers. It provides extensive graphics for analysis with pre- and post-processing modules. It is extremely fast on single compartment cases, and with the data editor, there is tremendous flexibility for parameter studies, such as "what if" testing. The model is particularly well suited for doing parameter studies of changes, both subtle and large, within a single compartment.

The development of the Hazard Methodology with the associated software has provided the underpinnings for a higher level of understanding of hazard prediction for buildings. The FASTLite tool, also based on the CFAST zone model and available since May, 1996, improved the usability of this type of modeling by providing a graphical user interface. The current list of users of the fire modeling software exceeds 2,500. The next version of CFAST, version 3, is expected this summer. There are many improvements that can be made beyond this, both in usability as well as functionality.

As a result of the multiple requests that NIST has received for enhancements to this software, NIST is proposing a consortium to maximize the benefits of further research. The purpose of the public meeting is to discuss formation of a consortium to support the continued development in a way that

addresses industry needs. The meeting will provide a forum to explain the rules which will apply to the consortium. The consortium will establish the direction for further research and development of the fire safety engineering tools. The program will be within the scope and confines of The Federal Technology Transfer Act of 1986 (Public Law 99-502, 15 U.S.C. 3710a), which provides federal laboratories including NIST, with the authority to enter into cooperative research and development agreements with qualified parties. Under this law, NIST may contribute personnel, equipment and facilities—but no funds—to the cooperative program. Members will be expected to make a contribution to the consortium's efforts in the form of personnel and/or funds. This is not a grant program.

Interested parties should contact NIST to confirm their interest at the address, telephone number or facsimile number shown above.

Dated: May 13, 1997.

Elaine Buntin-Mines,

Director, Program Office.

[FR Doc. 97-13200 Filed 5-19-97; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 021997G]

Atlantic Shark Fisheries

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

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) and request for written comments.

SUMMARY: NMFS announces its intent to prepare a SEIS to assess the potential impacts of adjustments to the Atlantic shark fishery in 1998 and beyond. NMFS is responsible for managing the Atlantic shark fishery.

NMFS will prepare an SEIS to assess the impact of shark harvests and proposed regulations on the natural and human environment. This notice of intent requests written comments on issues that NMFS should consider in preparing the SEIS and amendment to the Fishery Management Plan for sharks of the Atlantic Ocean (FMP). Scoping meetings for the SEIS will be scheduled at a later date.

The purpose of this notice is to: Inform the interested public of the

intent to prepare this SEIS; provide information on recent stock assessments for Atlantic sharks; announce that NMFS is considering measures for the 1998 Atlantic shark fishery; and request public comments.

DATES: Public comments must be received on or before July 21, 1997. Public meetings will be announced at a later date.

ADDRESSES: Comments on the proposal to prepare an SEIS must be sent to: Rebecca Lent, Highly Migratory Species Management Division (F/SF1), Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: C. Michael Bailey or Margo Schulze, 301-713-2347; fax 301-713-1917.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The fishery for Atlantic sharks is managed under the fishery management plan (FMP) prepared by NMFS under authority of section 304(g) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act), as amended, and implemented on April 26, 1993, through regulations found at 50 CFR part 678. The FMP established three species management groups, commercial quotas and recreational bag limits, fishing seasons, mandatory vessel reporting, and required commercial vessel permits (with an earned income requirement).

In recent years, sharks have been heavily exploited as a result of increased demand for their meat, fins, and cartilage. In addition, mortality is reported to be high for sharks that are caught as bycatch in the swordfish, tuna, and shrimp trawl fisheries. The 1994 Shark Evaluation Workshop (SEW) determined that the large coastal species group is overfished and that the pelagic and small coastal species groups are fully fished. The SEW concluded that increases in the quota for large coastal sharks in 1995, as planned in the FMP, could jeopardize stock recovery. A final rule that capped quotas for large coastal and pelagic sharks at the 1994 levels was published on May 2, 1995.

The 1995 SEW report, released by NMFS on April 20, 1995, agreed with the previous findings of the 1994 SEW and reiterated that the projected 1995 quota increase should be delayed indefinitely. In June 1996, a new stock assessment was conducted to reevaluate the status of large coastal sharks. The most recent data indicate that the rapid rate of decline that characterized the stock in the mid 1980s has slowed

¹ Peacock, R.D., Jones, W.W., Forney, G.P., Reneke, P., Portier, R., CFAST, the Consolidated Model of Fire and Smoke Transport, National Institute of Standards and Technology, Technical Note 1299 (1992).

significantly. Abundance estimates from the more recent years are variable, and a significant statistical trend, either increasing or decreasing, could not be detected.

Current Management Measures

NMFS recently implemented regulations to reduce commercial quotas and recreational bag limits to address the overfished status of large coastal sharks and to prevent overfishing of the fully fished pelagic and small coastal sharks (62 FR 16648). NMFS is currently considering a limited access program to address overcapacity in the shark fishery fleet (61 FR 68202).

Management Measures Under Consideration

NMFS will consider additional measures for 1998 and beyond for managing the Atlantic shark fishery. These measures may include minimum size restrictions, time/area closures to protect nursery areas, regional quotas, consistency between state and federal regulations, species-specific management, authorized gear restrictions, and a long-term rebuilding program. Consistent with the recent amendments to the Magnuson-Stevens Act, NMFS is establishing an advisory panel to assist in the development of the amendment to the FMP.

NMFS has determined that an SEIS is appropriate, due to the potentially significant impact of upcoming regulations on the human environment and because changes have occurred in the fishery since the last EIS was prepared in 1993. Participants in the fishery, including processors, may be required to operate under alternative management measures that will redistribute fishing effort and/or mortality in order to facilitate recovery of shark resources.

Timing of the Analysis and Tentative Decisionmaking Schedule

Written comments on the intent to prepare the EIS will be accepted until July 21, 1997. Comments will be considered in the preparation of a draft SEIS (DSEIS) as part of a FMP amendment addressing a long-term rebuilding program and other measures.

Dated: March 21, 1997.

Bruce Morehead,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service. [FR Doc. 97-13159 Filed 5-19-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-F

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 051297D]

North Pacific Fishery Management Council; Public Meetings

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

ACTION: Notice of committee meetings.

SUMMARY: Two committees of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) will meet June 4-6, 1997.

ADDRESSES: The meetings will be held at the Alaska Fisheries Science Center (AFSC), 7600 Sand Point Way, NE, in the Observer Training Room, Building 4, Seattle, WA 98115.

Council address: North Pacific Fishery Management Council, 605 W. 4th Ave., Suite 306, Anchorage, AK 99501-2252.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Chris Oliver, telephone: 907-271-2809.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Council's Insurance Technical Committee (relative to observer insurance coverage) will meet on June 4, 1997, 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., to discuss a recent Federal Employees Compensation Act designation for observers contained within the Magnuson-Stevens Act, and other related insurance considerations.

The Observer Oversight Committee will meet on June 5, 1997, beginning at 8:30 a.m. and will continue through June 6, 1997, as necessary. Agenda subjects for the meeting include:

1. An update on the current interim observer program, including a rollover of that program for at least another year, with minor revisions.
2. Discussions of potential alternatives to the existing program.

Special Accommodations

These meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Helen Allen, 907-271-2809, at least 5 working days prior to the meeting date.

Dated: May 14, 1997.

Bruce C. Morehead,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service. [FR Doc. 97-13164 Filed 5-19-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-F

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 051297C]

South Atlantic 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 South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) will hold a meeting of its Habitat and Environmental Protection Advisory Panel (Habitat AP).

DATES: The meeting will be held from May 28-29, 1997. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** for specific dates and times.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Town and Country Inn, 2008 Savannah Highway, Charleston, SC 29407; telephone: 803-571-1000.

Council address: South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, One Southpark Circle, Suite 306; Charleston, SC 29407-4699.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Susan Buchanan, Public Information Officer; telephone: (803) 571-4366; fax: (803) 769-4520; email: susan_buchanan@safmc.nmfs.gov

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Meeting Dates

May 28, 1997, 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

The Habitat AP will meet to discuss previous advisory panel recommendations; to review the Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) mandate in the Magnuson-Stevens Act and formulate AP recommendations for how the Council can meet these mandates; to review and make AP recommendations on the major provisions in the EFH Proposed Rule and the Technical Assistance Manual; to discuss marine biodiversity and how the Council may address it.

May 29, 1997, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

The Habitat AP will meet to discuss and specify major habitat types for the Council Habitat Plan and Policy Statement development, including coral, coral reefs and live/hard bottom habitat; mangrove, seagrass, and wetland habitats; oyster/shell habitat; and sargassum habitat. The AP will discuss other business before adjourning.

Special Accommodations

These meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities.