

mitigation, monitoring and reporting of such taking are set forth.

NMFS has defined “negligible impact” in 50 CFR 216.103 as “an impact resulting from the specified activity that cannot be reasonably expected to, and is not reasonably likely to, adversely affect the species or stock through effects on annual rates of recruitment or survival.”

Except with respect to certain activities not pertinent here, the MMPA defines “harassment” as: “any act of pursuit, torment, or annoyance which (i) has the potential to injure a marine mammal or marine mammal stock in the wild (Level A harassment); or (ii) has the potential to disturb a marine mammal or marine mammal stock in the wild by causing disruption of behavioral patterns, including, but not limited to, migration, breathing, nursing, breeding, feeding, or sheltering (Level B harassment).”

Summary of Request

On June 28, 2016, NMFS received an adequate and complete application from the AFSC requesting authorization for take of marine mammals incidental to fisheries research conducted by the AFSC. The requested regulations would be valid for five years from the date of issuance. The AFSC plans to conduct fisheries research surveys in multiple geographic regions, including the Gulf of Alaska, Bering Sea, and Arctic Ocean. It is possible that marine mammals may interact with fishing gear (e.g., trawls nets, longlines) used in AFSC’s fisheries research projects, resulting in injury, serious injury, or mortality. In addition, the AFSC operates active acoustic devices that have the potential to disturb marine mammals. Because the specified activities have the potential to take marine mammals present within these action areas, the AFSC requests authorization to take multiple species of marine mammal that may occur in these areas.

Specified Activities

The Federal Government has a responsibility to conserve and protect living marine resources in U.S. federal waters and has also entered into a number of international agreements and treaties related to the management of living marine resources in international waters outside the United States. NOAA has the primary responsibility for managing marine fin and shellfish species and their habitats, with that responsibility delegated within NOAA to NMFS.

In order to direct and coordinate the collection of scientific information needed to make informed management

decisions, Congress created six Regional Fisheries Science Centers, each a distinct organizational entity and the scientific focal point within NMFS for region-based, Federal fisheries-related research. This research is aimed at monitoring fish stock recruitment, abundance, survival and biological rates, geographic distribution of species and stocks, ecosystem process changes, and marine ecological research. The AFSC is the research arm of NMFS in U.S. waters off of Alaska.

Research is aimed at monitoring fish stock recruitment, survival and biological rates, abundance and geographic distribution of species and stocks, and providing other scientific information needed to improve our understanding of complex marine ecological processes. The AFSC proposes to administer and conduct these survey programs over the five-year period.

Information Solicited

Interested persons may submit information, suggestions, and comments concerning the AFSC’s request (see **ADDRESSES**). NMFS will consider all information, suggestions, and comments related to the request during the development of proposed regulations governing the incidental taking of marine mammals by the AFSC, if appropriate.

Dated: October 13, 2016.

Donna S. Wieting,

*Director, Office of Protected Resources,
National Marine Fisheries Service.*

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648–XE960

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC); Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice of a public meeting.

SUMMARY: The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council’s (MAFMC’s) *Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass* Monitoring Committee will hold a public meeting.

DATES: The meeting will begin at 1 p.m. on Wednesday, November 9, 2016, and end at 3 p.m. on Thursday, November 10, 2016, to view the agenda see

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Admiral Fell Inn, 888 S. Broadway, Baltimore, MD 21231; telephone: (410) 522–7377.

Council address: Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, 800 N. State Street, Suite 201, Dover, DE 19901; telephone: (302) 674–2331 or on their Web site, at www.mafmc.org.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Christopher M. Moore, Ph.D., Executive Director, Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, telephone: (302) 526–5255.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Agenda

The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council’s *Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass* Monitoring Committee will meet November 9 and 10 to develop recommendations for recreational management measures for the *summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass* fisheries for the 2017 fishing year. The Committee may also discuss initial analyses related to a possible *scup* commercial seasons framework action. A detailed agenda and background documents will be made available on the Council’s Web site (www.mafmc.org) prior to the meeting.

Special Accommodations

These meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aid should be directed to M. Jan Saunders, (302) 526–5251, at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

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

Dated: October 12, 2016.

Tracey L. Thompson,

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

[FR Doc. 2016–25090 Filed 10–17–16; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648–XE911

Magnuson-Stevens Act Provisions; General Provisions for Domestic Fisheries; Application for Exempted Fishing Permits

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

ACTION: Notice; request for comments.