

Note: The times and sequence specified in this agenda are subject to change.

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

Dated: September 19, 2023.

Rey Israel Marquez,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648-XD382]

South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council); Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice of a public meeting.

SUMMARY: The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) will hold a meeting of the Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel (AP) in Charleston, SC.

DATES: The meetings will be held October 10–12, 2023. The Snapper Grouper AP will meet from 1 p.m. until 5 p.m. on October 10; from 8:30 a.m. until 5 p.m. on October 11; and 8:30 a.m. until 12 p.m. on October 12, 2023.

ADDRESSES:

Meeting address: Town & Country Inn and Suites, 2008 Savannah Highway, Charleston, SC 29407; phone: (843) 571-1000.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kim Iverson, Public Information Officer, SAFMC; phone: (843) 571-4366 or toll free: (866) SAFMC-10; fax: (843) 769-4520; email: kim.iverson@safmc.net.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Meeting information, including the agenda, overview, briefing book materials, and an online public comment form will be posted on the Council's website at: <https://safmc.net/advisory-panel-meetings/> two weeks prior to the meeting. The meeting is open to the public and available via webinar as it occurs. The webinar registration link will be available from the Council's website. Public comment will also be taken during the meeting.

The agenda for the Snapper Grouper AP meeting includes: updating the blueline tilefish and golden tilefish fishery performance reports; updates and discussion of issues pertaining to Amendment 46 to the Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Plan (Private Recreational Permit); Snapper Grouper Amendment 55 (Scamp and

Yellowmouth Grouper); Snapper Grouper Amendment 44 (Yellowtail Snapper); and providing input for a Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) for the snapper grouper fishery.

AP members will also receive updates on additional ongoing amendments to the Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Plan and other Council programs and initiatives. The AP will provide input and recommendations on agenda items for the Council's consideration and address other items as needed.

Special Accommodations

The meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for auxiliary aids should be directed to the Council office (see **ADDRESSES**) 5 days prior to the meeting.

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Dated: September 19, 2023.

Rey Israel Marquez,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648-XD388]

Takes of Marine Mammals Incidental to Specified Activities; Taking Marine Mammals Incidental to the Office of Naval Research's Arctic Research Activities in the Beaufort and Chukchi Seas (Year 6)

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

ACTION: Notice; issuance of renewal incidental harassment authorization.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the regulations implementing the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA), as amended, notification is hereby given that NMFS has issued a renewal incidental harassment authorization (IHA) to the Office of Naval Research (ONR) for the renewal of their IHA to take marine mammals incidental to Arctic Research Activities (ARA) in the Beaufort Sea and eastern Chukchi Sea.

DATES: This renewal IHA is effective September 18, 2023 through September 13, 2024.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Robert Pauline, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, (301) 427-8401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The MMPA prohibits the “take” of marine mammals, with certain exceptions. Sections 101(a)(5)(A) and (D) of the MMPA (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*) direct the Secretary of Commerce (as delegated to NMFS) to allow, upon request, the incidental, but not intentional, taking of small numbers of marine mammals by U.S. citizens who engage in a specified activity (other than commercial fishing) within a specified geographical region if certain findings are made and either regulations are issued or, if the taking is limited to harassment, an IHA is issued.

Authorization for incidental takings shall be granted if NMFS finds that the taking will have a negligible impact on the species or stock(s) and will not have an unmitigable adverse impact on the availability of the species or stock(s) for taking for subsistence uses (where relevant). Further, NMFS must prescribe the permissible methods of taking and other “means of effecting the least practicable adverse impact” on the affected species or stocks and their habitat, paying particular attention to rookeries, mating grounds, and areas of similar significance, and on the availability of such species or stocks for taking for certain subsistence uses (referred to here as “mitigation measures”). Monitoring and reporting of such takings are also required. The meaning of key terms such as “take,” “harassment,” and “negligible impact” can be found in section 3 of the MMPA (16 U.S.C. 1362) and the agency's regulations at 50 CFR 216.103.

NMFS' regulations implementing the MMPA at 50 CFR 216.107(e) indicate that IHAs may be renewed for additional periods of time not to exceed 1 year for each reauthorization. In the notice of proposed IHA for the initial authorization, NMFS described the circumstances under which we would consider issuing a renewal for this activity, and requested public comment on a potential renewal under those circumstances. Specifically, on a case-by-case basis, NMFS may issue a one-time 1-year Renewal IHA following notice to the public providing an additional 15 days for public comments when (1) up to another year of identical, or nearly identical, activities as described in the Detailed Description of Specified Activities section of the initial IHA issuance notice is planned, or (2) the activities as described in the Description of the Specified Activities