

this final IHA a stipulation that when technically feasible, survey equipment must be ramped up at the start or restart of survey activities. Ramp-up must begin with the power of the smallest acoustic equipment at its lowest practical power output appropriate for the survey. When technically feasible the power must then be gradually turned up and other acoustic sources added in a way such that the source level would increase gradually. NMFS notes that ramp-up would not be required for short periods where acoustic sources were shut down (*i.e.*, less than 30 minutes) if PSOs have maintained constant visual observation and no detections of marine mammals occurred within the applicable shutdown zones.

Changes From Proposed to Final Renewal IHA

No changes were made from the proposed renewal IHA to the final renewal IHA.

Determinations

SouthCoast Wind's planned activities consist of a subset of activities analyzed in the initial IHA. In analyzing the effects of the activities for the initial IHA, NMFS determined that SouthCoast Wind's activities would have a negligible impact on the affected species or stocks and that authorized take numbers of each species or stock were small relative to the relevant stocks (*e.g.*, less than one-third the abundance of all stocks). The required mitigation measures and monitoring and reporting requirements, as described above, are identical to the initial IHA.

NMFS has concluded that there is no new information suggesting that our analysis or findings should change from those reached for the initial IHA. This includes consideration of the draft 2023 SAR estimated abundance of the NARW stock and other stocks, as shown in table 2 of the **Federal Register** notice for the proposed renewal IHA (89 FR 76796, September 19, 2024). NMFS has authorized two takes of NARW, by Level B harassment only, and the impacts resulting from the project's activities are neither reasonably expected nor reasonably likely to adversely affect the stock through effects on annual rates of recruitment or survival. Additionally, only about 0.59 percent of this stock's abundance is authorized to be taken by Level B harassment.

Based on the information and analysis contained here and in the referenced documents, NMFS has determined the following: (1) the required mitigation measures will effect the least practicable impact on marine mammal species or

stocks and their habitat; (2) the authorized takes will have a negligible impact on the affected marine mammal species or stocks; (3) the authorized takes represent small numbers of marine mammals relative to the affected stock abundances; (4) SouthCoast Wind's activities will not have an unmitigable adverse impact on taking for subsistence purposes as no relevant subsistence uses of marine mammals are implicated by this action, and; (5) appropriate monitoring and reporting requirements are included.

National Environmental Policy Act

This action is consistent with categories of activities identified in Categorical Exclusion B4 (incidental take authorizations with no anticipated serious injury or mortality) of the Companion Manual for NOAA Administrative Order 216-6A, which do not individually or cumulatively have the potential for significant impacts on the quality of the human environment and for which we have not identified any extraordinary circumstances that would preclude this categorical exclusion. Accordingly, NMFS determined that the issuance of the initial IHA qualified to be categorically excluded from further NEPA review. NMFS has determined that the application of this categorical exclusion remains appropriate for this renewal IHA.

Endangered Species Act

Section 7(a)(2) of the ESA of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) requires that each Federal agency insure that any action it authorizes, funds, or carries out is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of any endangered or threatened species or result in the destruction or adverse modification of designated critical habitat. To ensure ESA compliance for the issuance of IHAs, NMFS consults internally whenever we propose to authorize take for endangered or threatened species.

NMFS Office of Protected Resources has authorized the incidental take of four species of marine mammals which are listed under the ESA, including the North Atlantic right, fin, sei, and sperm whale, and has determined that these activities fall within the scope of activities analyzed in NMFS Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office's programmatic consultation regarding geophysical surveys along the U.S. Atlantic coast in the three Atlantic Renewable Energy Regions (completed June 29, 2021; revised September 2021).

Renewal

NMFS has issued a renewal IHA to SouthCoast Wind for the take of 15 species (comprising 16 stocks) of marine mammals incidental to conducting marine site characterization surveys offshore of Massachusetts and Rhode Island in the BOEM Lease Area OCS-A 0521 and associated ECR areas, which include the previously explained mitigation, monitoring, and reporting requirements.

Dated: October 22, 2024.

Kimberly Damon-Randall,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648-XE404]

Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice of a public meeting.

SUMMARY: The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council will hold a one day in-person meeting of its Outreach and Education Technical Committee.

DATES: The meeting will convene on Wednesday, November 13, 2024, from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., EST.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held in-person at the Gulf Council office. Please visit the Gulf Council website at www.gulfcouncil.org for meeting materials.

Council address: Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, 4107 W. Spruce Street, Suite 200, Tampa, FL 33607; telephone: (813) 348-1630.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Emily Muehlstein, Public Information Officer, Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council; emily.muehlstein@gulfcouncil.org, telephone: (813) 348-1630.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Wednesday, November 13, 2024; 8:30 a.m. until 4 p.m., EST

The Meeting will begin with welcome and introductions, election of chair/vice chair, adoption of agenda, approval of December 19, 2023 meeting summary, and scope of work.

The Committee will review Recreational Initiative, *Shrimp*, and For-

Hire Reporting Outreach programs. The Committee will receive an update on Ecosystem Based Fishery Management (EBFM) Outreach, review and discuss Management Areas and Boundary Outreach, 2024 Communications Improvement Plan Progress and 2024 Analytics. The Committee will hold a discussion of Council Outreach Strategy and 2025 Communications Improvement Plan Ideas.

The Committee will discuss Other Business items and receive Public Comment before the meeting adjourns.—Meeting Adjourns

The Agenda is subject to change, and the latest version along with other meeting materials will be posted on www.gulfcouncil.org.

Although other non-emergency issues not on the agenda may come before this group for discussion, in accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, those issues may not be the subject of formal action during this meeting. Actions will be restricted to those issues specifically identified in the agenda 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-action to address the emergency.

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

Dated: October 21, 2024.

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-XE411]

Research Track Assessment for Three Stocks of Yellowtail Flounder Including Cape Cod/Gulf of Maine, Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic, and Georges Bank

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

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: NMFS will convene the Research Track Assessment Peer Review Meeting for the purpose of reviewing Cape Cod/Gulf of Maine (CCGOM), Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic (SNEMA), and Georges Bank (GB) stocks of Yellowtail flounder. The Research Track Assessment Peer Review is a formal scientific peer-review process for evaluating and presenting stock assessment results to managers for fish stocks in the offshore U.S. and Canadian waters of the northwest Atlantic. Assessments are prepared by the research track working group and reviewed by an independent panel of stock assessment experts from the Center of Independent Experts (CIE). The public is invited to attend the presentations and discussions between the review panel and the scientists who have participated in the stock assessment process.

DATES: The public portion of the Research Track Assessment Peer Review Meeting will be held from November 18,

2024–November 22, 2024. The meeting will conclude on November 22, 2024 at 5 p.m. Eastern Standard Time. Please see **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** for the daily meeting agenda.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held in the Clark Conference Room at the Northeast Fisheries Science Center Aquarium Building: 166 Water Street, Woods Hole, MA 02543; and via Google Meet:

Google Meet joining info: <https://meet.google.com/fdr-vztn-jxd> Or dial: (US) +1 443-892-2999

PIN: 475 421 044#

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Kristan Blackhart, (206) 289-0383; kristan.blackhart@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: For further information, please visit the Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC) website at <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/new-england-mid-atlantic/population-assessments/fishery-stock-assessments-new-england-and-mid-atlantic>. For additional information about research track assessment peer review, please visit the NEFSC web page at <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/new-england-mid-atlantic/population-assessments/research-track-stock-assessments>.

Daily Meeting Agenda—Research Track Peer Review Meeting

The agenda is subject to change; all times are approximate and may be changed at the discretion of the Peer Review Chair.

Monday, November 18, 2024

Time	Topic	Presenter(s)	Notes
10 a.m.–10:15 a.m.	Welcome/Logistics	Blackhart, Chen	Ecosystem.
10:15 a.m.–10:45 a.m.	Research Track (RT) Overview	Adams	
10:45 a.m.–12:15 p.m.	Terms of Reference (TOR) #1	Cadrin	
12:15 p.m.–1:15 p.m.	Lunch		
1:15 p.m.–2:45 p.m.	TOR #2	Alade, Hansell, Hodgdon	Catch.
2:45 p.m.–3 p.m.	Break		
3 p.m.–3:15 p.m.	Public Comment	Public	Conclusions, Recommendations, and Final Wrap-up for TORs 1–2
3:15 p.m.–3:45 p.m.	Discussion/Summary	Review Panel	
3:45 p.m.	Adjourn		

Tuesday, November 19, 2024

Time	Topic	Presenter(s)	Notes
10 a.m.–10:05 a.m.	Welcome/Logistics	To be determined (TBD), Chen	Survey Data.
10:05 a.m.–11:35 a.m.	TOR #3	Alade, Hansell, Hodgdon	