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New England Fishery Management Council

50 WATER STREET | NEWBURYPORT, MASSACHUSETTS 01950 | PHONE 978 465 0492 | FAX 978 465 3116  
John Pappalardo, *Chairman* | Paul J. Howard, *Executive Director*

March 28, 2011

Ms. Patricia Kurkul  
Regional Administrator  
NMFS, Northeast Regional Office  
55 Great Republic Drive  
Gloucester, MA 01930

**RE: Comments on Red Crab EFP Extension EFP Proposal**

Dear Pat:

The New England Fishery Management Council has no objection to the experimental fishery proposal noted above published in the *Federal Register* on March 28, 2011.

If you have any question please contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul J. Howard". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Paul J. Howard  
Executive Director

**Public Comments**

Public comments are being solicited on the application and the EA through the end of the comment period stated in this notice. To be considered, comments must be received by 5 p.m. A.L.T. on the last day of the comment period; that does not mean postmarked or otherwise transmitted by that date. Copies of the application and EA are available for review from NMFS (see ADDRESSES). Interested persons also may comment on the application and on the EA at the March/April 2011 Council meeting during public testimony.

Information regarding the meeting is available at the Council's Web site at <http://www.alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/npfmc/>.

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

Dated: March 23, 2011.

**Margo Schulze-Haugen,**

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

[FR Doc. 2011-7240 Filed 3-25-11; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE****National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

RIN 0648-XA285

**Magnuson-Stevens Act Provisions; General Provisions for Domestic Fisheries; Extension for Exempted Fishing Permit**

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

**ACTION:** Notice; request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** The Assistant Regional Administrator for Sustainable Fisheries, Northeast Region, NMFS, has made a preliminary determination that the subject exempted fishing permit (EFP) application contains all the required information and warrants further consideration. This EFP extension would exempt four commercial fishing vessels from the restriction on fishing for, catching, possessing, landing, and selling female red crabs in excess of one standard tote for the purpose of research on an experimental female red crab fishery that is being conducted in conjunction with the Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Sciences.

Regulations under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act require publication of this notification to provide interested parties the opportunity to comment on applications for proposed EFPs.

**DATES:** Comments must be received on or before April 12, 2011.

**ADDRESSES:** You may submit written comments by any of the following methods:

- *E-mail:* [nero.eff@noaa.gov](mailto:nero.eff@noaa.gov). Include in the subject line "Comments on Red Crab EFP Extension."
- *Mail:* Patricia A. Kurkul, Regional Administrator, NMFS, NE Regional Office, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930. Mark the outside of the envelope "Comments on Red Crab EFP Extension."
- *Fax:* (978) 281-9135.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Carly Knoell, Fisheries Management Specialist, 978-281-9224, [Carly.Knoell@noaa.gov](mailto:Carly.Knoell@noaa.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** An application for an EFP extension was submitted on February 28, 2011, by Dr. Richard Wahle of the Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Sciences; Dr. Yong Chen of the School of Marine Sciences, University of Maine; and Mr. Jon Williams of the New England Red Crab Harvesters' Association to conduct commercial fishing activities that the regulations would otherwise restrict. The EFP would authorize four vessels to catch, possess, land, and sell female red crabs in excess of one standard tote of female red crab, as specified at 50 CFR 648.263(a)(3). Vessels would remain subject to all other commercial fishing regulations, including red crab possession limits and days-at-sea restrictions.

The primary goal of the experimental fishery is to harvest non-egg-bearing females to expand the red crab market and increase efficiency in the harvesting process. In addition, an experimental fishery that includes non-egg-bearing females has provided an opportunity to conduct at-sea sampling, renewed tagging, and model development to better evaluate the growth and reproductive performance of the population, as well as the impact of current and proposed harvesting on yields and egg production. This aspect of the project is conducted by an onboard researcher under the direction of Dr. Wahle.

The EFP was initially issued July 23, 2009, for 1 year, expiring July 22, 2010. An extension was granted July 26, 2010, through the end of the fishing year (February 28, 2011). A subsequent extension is now being requested due to initial logistical delays and additional time to complete research and funding components of this study. No additional exemptions will be included in the extension of this EFP and the activities of the study remain consistent with the

Atlantic Deep-Sea Red Crab Fishery Management Plan.

If approved, the applicant may request minor modifications and extensions to the EFP throughout the year. EFP modifications and extensions may be granted without further notice if they are deemed essential to facilitate completion of the proposed research and have minimal impacts that do not change the scope or impact of the initially approved EFP request. Any fishing activity conducted outside the scope of the exempted fishing activity would be prohibited.

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

Dated: March 23, 2011.

**Margo Schulze-Haugen,**

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

[FR Doc. 2011-7239 Filed 3-25-11; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE****National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration****Availability of Seats for the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council**

**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:** The ONMS is seeking applications for the following vacant seats on the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council: Diving, Education (alternate), Research (alternate), Tourism (alternate) and Agriculture (alternate). Applicants are chosen based upon their particular expertise and experience in relation to the seat for which they are applying; community and professional affiliations; philosophy regarding the protection and management of marine resources; and possibly the length of residence in the area affected by the sanctuary.

Applicants who are chosen should expect to serve until February 2014. The Research alternate and Agriculture alternate should expect to serve until February 2013 because the seats were vacated prematurely.

**DATES:** Applications are due by April 15, 2010.

**ADDRESSES:** Application kits may be obtained from 299 Foam Street, Monterey, CA, 93940 or online at <http://montereybay.noaa.gov/>.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE  
NORTHEAST REGION  
55 Great Republic Drive  
Gloucester, MA 01930-2276

Paul J. Howard, Executive Director  
New England Fishery Management Council  
50 Water Street, Mill 2  
Newburyport, MA 01950



Re: Experimental Fishing Permit (EFP) Extension

Dear Paul J. Howard:

The regulations on exempted fishing activities at 50 CFR 600.745(b)(3) require that the Regional Administrator forward copies of EFP applications to the Regional Fishery Management Council(s), the U.S. Coast Guard, and the appropriate fishery management agencies of affected states, accompanied by the following information: (A) The effect of the proposed EFP on the target and incidental species, including the effect on any Total Allowable Catch; (B) a citation of the regulation or regulations that, without the EFP, would prohibit the proposed activity; and (C) biological information relevant to the proposal, including appropriate statements of environmental impacts, including impacts on marine mammals and threatened or endangered species. Therefore, we have attached the Federal Register notice that describes the activities proposed by the applicant.

Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Sciences submitted an application for and EFP extension on February 28, 2011, to conduct commercial fishing activities that the regulations would otherwise restrict. The EFP would authorize four vessels to catch, possess, land, and sell female red crabs in excess of one standard tote of female red crab, as specified at 50 CFR 648.263(a)(3). The EFP was initially issued July 23, 2009, for 1 year, expiring July 22, 2010. An extension was granted July 26, 2010, through the end of the fishing year (February 28, 2011). A subsequent extension is now being requested due to initial logistical delays and additional time to complete research and funding components of this study. No additional exemptions will be included in the extension of this EFP and the activities of the study remain consistent with the Atlantic Deep-Sea Red Crab Fishery Management Plan.

The primary goal of the experimental fishery is to harvest non-egg-bearing females to expand the red crab market and increase efficiency in the harvesting process. In addition, an experimental fishery that includes non-egg-bearing females has provided an opportunity to conduct at-sea sampling, renewed tagging, and model development to better evaluate the growth and reproductive performance of the population, as well as the impact of current and proposed harvesting on yields and egg production.

Please respond to the following contact person with any comments you have on the experimental fishing proposal within 15 days of your receipt of this letter.

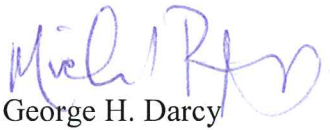


CONTACT

Carly Knoell  
Sustainable Fisheries Division, Northeast Region, NMFS  
55 Great Republic Drive  
Gloucester, MA 01930  
Phone: (978) 281-9224  
FAX: (978) 281-9135  
Email: Carly.Knoell@noaa.gov

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

*for* 

George H. Darcy  
Assistant Regional Administrator  
for Sustainable Fisheries