

Dated: October 10, 2008.

**Samuel D. Rauch III,**

*Deputy Assistant Administrator For  
Regulatory Programs, National Marine  
Fisheries Service.*

[FR Doc. E8-24795 Filed 10-16-08; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-S

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

#### Draft NOAA Deep-Sea Coral and Sponge Research and Management Strategic Plan

**AGENCY:** Coral Reef Conservation  
Program, NOAA, Department of  
Commerce.

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

**SUMMARY:** The National Oceanic and  
Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)  
publishes this notice to announce the  
availability of the Draft NOAA Deep-Sea  
Coral and Sponge Research and  
Management Strategic Plan for public  
comment. The Draft NOAA Deep-Sea  
Coral and Sponge Research and  
Management Strategic Plan identifies  
objectives, priorities and approaches  
that will guide NOAA's research,  
management, and international  
activities from Fiscal Year 2009 through  
2013 as they relate to deep coral and  
sponge ecosystems.

**DATES:** Comments on this draft must be  
received no later than 5 p.m., Eastern  
Standard Time, January 15, 2009.

**ADDRESSES:** The Draft NOAA Deep-Sea  
Coral and Sponge Research and  
Management Strategic Plan will be  
available at the following location:  
[http://www.coralreef.noaa.gov/Library/  
Publications/deepcstratplan.pdf](http://www.coralreef.noaa.gov/Library/Publications/deepcstratplan.pdf).

The public is encouraged to submit  
comments on the Draft NOAA Deep-Sea  
Coral and Sponge Research and  
Management Strategic Plan  
electronically to:

[deepseacoral.strategicplan.gov](mailto:deepseacoral.strategicplan.gov). For  
commenters who do not have access to  
a computer, comments on the document  
may be submitted in writing to: NOAA  
National Marine Fisheries Service, c/o  
Karen Palmigiano, NOAA's Deep-Sea  
Coral Program, 1315 East-West  
Highway, Room 15828, Silver Spring,  
Maryland 20910.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**  
Karen Palmigiano by mail at NOAA  
National Marine Fisheries Service, c/o  
Karen Palmigiano, NOAA's Deep-Sea  
Coral Program, 1315 East-West  
Highway, Room 15828, Silver Spring,  
Maryland 20910 or phone at 301-713-

3459 or e-mail at  
[karen.palmigiano@noaa.gov](mailto:karen.palmigiano@noaa.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric  
Administration (NOAA) announces that  
the Draft NOAA Deep-Sea Coral and  
Sponge Research and Management  
Strategic Plan is available for public  
review and comment. All interested  
parties are encouraged to provide  
comments. The Draft NOAA Deep-Sea  
Coral and Sponge Management and  
Strategic Plan is being issued for  
comment only and is not intended for  
interim use. Suggested changes will be  
considered for incorporation into the  
final version, where appropriate.

The Draft NOAA Deep-Sea Coral and  
Sponge Research and Management  
Strategic Plan identifies objectives,  
priorities, and approaches that will  
guide NOAA's research, management,  
and international activities from Fiscal  
Year 2009 through Fiscal Year 2013 as  
they relate to deep coral and sponge  
ecosystems. It is intended to integrate  
research and conservation needs and to  
be a flexible, evolving document that  
allows NOAA and its partners to  
address our growing understanding of  
management challenges and allow new  
issues and priorities to be addressed as  
appropriate. NOAA is soliciting review  
and comment from the public and all  
interested parties on the Draft Deep-Sea  
Coral and Sponge Research and  
Management Strategic Plan.

The Draft NOAA Deep-Sea Coral and  
Sponge Research and Management  
Strategic Plan is presented in three  
sections: (I) Exploration and Research;  
(II) Conservation and Management; and  
(III) International Cooperation.

Section I identifies the role of  
research in management, including  
NOAA's priorities and objectives for  
research and exploration of deep-sea  
coral and sponge ecosystems and  
anticipated deliverables for each  
objective. Section II provides objectives  
and approaches that NOAA will  
undertake to enhance protection of  
deep-sea coral and sponge communities  
working with the Councils, other  
Federal agencies and interested  
partners. NOAA's strategy for managing  
deep-sea coral and sponge ecosystems is  
centered on the authority provided to  
NOAA through the Magnuson-Stevens  
Fisheries Conservation and Management  
Act as amended January 12, 2007, and  
the National Marine Sanctuary Act.  
Section III describes NOAA's  
participation in international activities  
to protect and/or conserve deep-sea  
coral and sponge ecosystems.

NOAA welcomes all comments on the  
content of the Draft NOAA Deep-Sea

Coral and Sponge Research and  
Management Strategic Plan. We also  
request commenters to acknowledge  
areas where more language may be  
needed and to provide specific language  
for those areas.

Using the format guidance described  
below will facilitate the processing of  
reviewer comments and assure that all  
comments are appropriately considered;  
however, all comments received will be  
considered. Please format your  
comments into the following three  
sections: (1) Background information  
about yourself (optional); (2) overview  
or general comments; and (3) specific  
comments. Section one may include the  
following background information about  
yourself on the first page of your  
comments: Your name(s),  
organization(s), area(s) of expertise, and  
contact information such as mailing  
address, telephone and fax numbers,  
and e-mail address(s). Section two  
should consist of overview comments,  
and each should be numbered. Section  
three should consist of comments that  
are specific to particular pages,  
paragraphs, or lines in the document,  
and each comment should identify the  
page and line numbers to which it  
applies. Please number and print  
identifying information at the top of all  
pages.

Public comments may be submitted  
from October 17, 2008, through January  
15, 2009.

Dated: October 2, 2008.

**David Kennedy,**

*Director, Ocean and Coastal Resource  
Management.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XL14

#### Endangered and Threatened Species; Take of Anadromous Fish

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

**ACTION:** Notice of decision and  
availability for permit 13537.

**SUMMARY:** This notice advises the public  
that a scientific research permit has  
been issued to the Washington  
Department of Fish and Wildlife,  
pursuant of the Endangered Species Act  
of 1973 (ESA), and that the decision  
documents are available upon request.