

Dated: October 7, 2008.

Robert J. Leaverton,

Forest Supervisor.

[FR Doc. E8-24262 Filed 10-15-08; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forests; Santa Rosa Ranger District; Martin Basin Rangeland Management Project

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement; Corrected.

SUMMARY: The Santa Rosa Ranger District of the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on a proposal to authorize continued livestock grazing on National Forest System (NFS) lands within the boundaries administered by the Santa Rosa Ranger District. The Project Area is located in Humboldt County, Nevada.

The preparation of this EIS is needed because the Record of Decision issued on June 2, 2006, for the Martin Basin Rangeland Management Project was appealed, and following review, the decision was reversed. A new EIS is being prepared to completely replace the Draft EIS released in 2004 and the Final EIS released in 2005.

DATES: The new Draft EIS is expected to be released for public review and comment in December of 2008 and the new Final EIS is expected to be released in February of 2009.

ADDRESSES: Send written comments to: Jose Noriega, District Ranger, Santa Rosa Ranger District, 1200 East Winnemucca Blvd., Winnemucca, NV 89445.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT: For further information, mail correspondence to or contact Jose Noriega, District Ranger, Santa Rosa Ranger District, 1200 East Winnemucca Blvd., Winnemucca, NV 89445. The telephone number is: 775-623-5025, extension 5. E-mail address is: jnoriega@fs.fed.us.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Initiation of the Martin Basin Rangeland Project began in 2002 with the original Notice of Intent published in the **Federal Register** on December 30, 2002 (Vol. 67, Number 250). The Draft EIS was released in May of 2004 for a 135 day comment period. The Final EIS was released in June of 2005 and a 45 day comment period was also provided

at that time. The Record of Decision for this project was issued on June 2, 2006, by then Forest Supervisor, Robert L. Vaught.

The Record of Decision for the Martin Basin Rangeland Project was appealed to the Intermountain Regional Forester. On September 6, 2006, the Regional Forester issued a decision on the appeal and remanded the decision back to the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest for additional analysis.

A Notice of Intent to prepare a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement was published in the **Federal Register** on February 26, 2007 (Vol. 72, Number 37). That NOI estimated that the Draft Supplemental EIS would be released for review and comment on April 2007 and the Final Supplemental EIS would be completed by July 2007. This Corrected NOI provides notice that a new EIS is being prepared instead of a supplement to the 2005 Final EIS. This notice also updates the estimated dates for release of the new Draft and Final EISs, and provides additional information on the Proposed Action and Possible Alternatives.

Proposed Action

The Proposed Action, as outlined in the Final EIS released in 2005, will be refined and include additional details. Specifically, the Proposed Action would reduce the maximum utilization on forage to 45 percent for riparian areas and 50 percent for uplands. It would also apply a set of proper use criteria (for example, utilization, streambank disturbance) to each allotment based on its ecological condition (functioning, functioning-at-risk, or non-functioning). The ecological condition of the allotments would continue to be evaluated through a long-term monitoring process. If long-term monitoring indicates the ecological condition of the allotment has changed, then the set of proper use criteria associated with that ecological condition would be applied to the allotment.

Possible Alternatives

In addition to the Proposed Action, two additional alternatives have been identified from analysis in the EIS:

1. *Current Management Alternative:* Continue current grazing management.
2. *No Grazing Alternative:* Do not issue new grazing permits when existing permits expire.

Scoping Process

The scoping period for this EIS was formally initiated in December of 2002 when the original Notice of Intent for this project was published in the

Federal Register (December 30, 2002; volume 67, Number 250).

While no additional scoping periods are planned prior to the release of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, those wishing to submit comments may do so at the address listed above for District Ranger Jose Noriega.

Early Notice of Importance of Public Participation in Subsequent Environmental Review

A new Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be prepared for comment. The comment period on the new Draft EIS will be 45 days from the date that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) publishes the Notice of Availability (NOA) in the **Federal Register**.

It is important that reviewers provide their comments at such times and in such a way that they are useful to the Agency's preparation of the EIS. Therefore, comments should be provided prior to the close of the comment period and should clearly articulate the reviewer's concerns and contentions. The submission of timely and specific comments can affect a reviewer's ability to participate in subsequent administrative review or judicial review.

Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be part of the public record for this proposed action. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered; however, anonymous comments will not provide the respondent with standing to participate in subsequent administrative review or judicial review.

(Authority: 40 CFR 1501.7 and 1508.22; Forest Service Handbook 1909.15, Section 22.3)

Dated: September 19, 2008.

Edward C. Monnig,

Forest Supervisor.

[FR Doc. E8-24366 Filed 10-15-08; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XL03

Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Snapper and Grouper Off the Southern Atlantic States

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and

Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of receipt of an application for an exempted fishing permit; request for comments.

SUMMARY: NMFS announces the receipt of an application for an exempted fishing permit (EFP) from the Gulf Fishermen's Association. If granted, the EFP would authorize the applicants, with certain conditions, to collect limited numbers of undersized and out-of-season reef fish in Gulf of Mexico Federal waters. It would also allow a limited number of red snapper to be collected outside the Gulf of Mexico Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) program. This study is intended to provide detailed information and disposition of reef fish discards by the eastern Gulf of Mexico commercial reef fish fishery.

DATES: Comments must be received no later than 5 p.m., eastern time, on November 17, 2008.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments on the application by any of the following methods:

- E-mail: Peter.Hood@noaa.gov.

Include in the subject line of the e-mail comment the following document identifier: "GFA EFP".

- Mail: Peter Hood, Southeast Regional Office, NMFS, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, FL 33701.

- Fax: 727-824-5308.

The application and related documents are available for review upon written request to any of the above addresses.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Peter Hood, 727-824-5305; fax: 727-824-5308; e-mail: Peter.Hood@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The EFP is requested under the authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*), and regulations at 50 CFR 600.745(b) concerning exempted fishing.

The described research is part of a Cooperative Research Program Grant (Cooperative Agreement No. NA08NMF4540401). The Cooperative Research Program is a means of involving commercial and recreational fishermen in the collection of fundamental fisheries information. Resource collection efforts support the development and evaluation of fisheries management and regulatory options.

The proposed collection for scientific research involves activities otherwise prohibited by regulations implementing the Fishery Management Plan for the Reef Fish Resources of the Gulf of Mexico. The applicants require

authorization to harvest and possess undersized and out-of-season snapper and grouper for scientific research activities during a 1-year period beginning late in 2008. It would also allow the applicants to land red snapper outside of the current IFQ program over this same time period. Specimens would be collected from Federal waters off the west coast of Florida, in three geographical areas: NMFS' Gulf of Mexico statistical grids 2-4, 5-7, and 8-10. Sampling would occur during normal fishing operations of the commercial reef fish longline and vertical hook-and-line fishery. The applicant intends to use 10 longline and 10 vertical hook-and-line gear vessels to randomly collect up to 300 reef fish from each of the three geographical areas. The applicant also intends to retain 100 percent of the catch during two fishing trips within each of three geographical areas. Fish from these portions of the study will be provided to NMFS personnel for length and life history information to better characterize the discards in the commercial fishery. Finally, the applicants will use logbooks and video monitors to test methods for real-time catch reporting and at-sea observation. Data collections for this study would support improved information about the catch, bycatch, discards, and discard mortality for reef fish species.

Accurate estimates of bycatch and the level of discards is a persistent problem for assessing Gulf of Mexico reef fish stocks. Using fisheries dependant data accompanied by independent video monitoring would help establish reliability of current bycatch information and provide a higher level of confidence from various constituents interested in this fishery. Additionally, this information would assist fishery managers in developing more effective regulations to reduce bycatch and discard mortality.

NMFS finds this application warrants further consideration. Based on a preliminary review, NMFS intends to issue an EFP. Possible conditions the agency may impose on this permit, if it is indeed granted, include but are not limited to, a prohibition of conducting research within marine protected areas, marine sanctuaries, or special management zones, without additional authorization. Additionally, NMFS may prohibit the possession of Nassau or goliath grouper, and require any sea turtles taken incidentally during the course of fishing or scientific research activities to be handled with due care to prevent injury to live specimens, observed for activity, and returned to the water. A final decision on issuance

of the EFP will depend on a NMFS review of public comments received on the application, consultations with the affected states, the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, and the U.S. Coast Guard, and a determination that it is consistent with all applicable laws.

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

Dated: October 9, 2008.

Emily H. Menashes,

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

[FR Doc. E8-24541 Filed 10-15-08; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XL19

Marine Mammals; File No. 13614

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

ACTION: Notice; receipt of application.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that Sea World, Inc., 9205 South Park Circle, Suite 400, Orlando, FL 32819, has applied in due form for a permit to import one pilot whale (*Globicephala melas*) for the purposes of public display.

DATES: Written or telefaxed comments must be received on or before November 17, 2008.

ADDRESSES: The application and related documents are available for review upon written request or by appointment in the following offices:

Permits, Conservation and Education Division, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 13705, Silver Spring, MD 20910; phone (301) 713-2289; fax (301) 427-2521; and Southwest Region, NMFS, 501 West Ocean Blvd., Suite 4200, Long Beach, CA 90802-4213; phone (562)980-4001; fax (562)980-4018.

Written comments or requests for a public hearing on this application should be mailed to the Chief, Permits, Conservation and Education Division, F/PR1, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 13705, Silver Spring, MD 20910. Those individuals requesting a hearing should set forth the specific reasons why a hearing on this particular request would be appropriate.

Comments may also be submitted by facsimile at (301)427-2521, provided the facsimile is confirmed by hard copy