

September 30, 2002. During that comment period, we received information indicating that we had identified only one of the two parasites affecting the catfish, baitfish, sportfish, largemouth bass, and hybrid striped bass aquaculture facilities and that we had underestimated the economic impact that the proposed rulemaking may have on those facilities. However, we did not receive sufficient information on the magnitude of the effects of these parasites on those facilities to complete the economic analysis. We are reopening the comment period to gather more economic and scientific data on black carp. In addition to seeking general scientific and economic information on black carp, we are seeking specific information relative to the magnitude of impact that yellow grubs (*Clinostomum complanatum*) and flatworms (*Bolbophorus confusus*) have had on catfish, baitfish, sportfish, largemouth bass, and hybrid striped bass aquaculture facilities; alternative chemical and/or biological methods used to control the parasites affecting these aquaculture facilities; potential or known distribution of black carp; and potential or known impact of black carp on native species.

#### Public Comments Solicited

We are reopening the comment period at this time in order to collect the best and most current scientific and economic data available regarding the proposal to add black carp to the list of injurious wildlife under the Lacey Act. Previously submitted comments on the proposed rule need not be resubmitted. We will accept new and/or additional written comments and information during this reopened comment period.

Submit comments as identified in **ADDRESSES**. If you submit comments by e-mail, please submit comments as an ASCII file format and avoid the use of special characters and encryption. Please include "Attn: [RIN 1018-AG70]" in your e-mail subject line and your name and return address in your e-mail message. If you do not receive a confirmation from the system that we have received your e-mail message, contact us directly by calling our office at telephone number 703-358-2148 during normal business hours. Please note that this e-mail address will be closed at the termination of this public comment period.

Our practice is to make comments, including names and home addresses of respondents, available for public review during regular business hours. Individual respondents may request that we withhold their home address from the rulemaking record, which we will

honor to the extent allowable by law. In some circumstances, we would withhold from the rulemaking record a respondent's identity, as allowable by law. If you wish for us to withhold your name and/or address, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comment. However, we will not consider anonymous comments. We will make all submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, available for public inspection in their entirety.

#### Authority

The authority citation continues to read as follows:

**Authority:** 18 U.S.C. 42.

Dated: May 22, 2003.

**Craig Manson,**

*Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks.*

[FR Doc. 03-13996 Filed 6-3-03; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4310-55-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

#### 50 CFR Part 648

[Docket No. 030519127-3127-01; I.D. 042403A]

RIN 0648-AO10

#### Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act Provisions; Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Northeast Skate Complex (Skate) Fisheries; Skate Fishery Management Plan

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

**ACTION:** Proposed rule; request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** NMFS proposes regulations to implement the Northeast (NE) Skate Fishery Management Plan (FMP). This proposed rule would establish: A possession limit for skate wings; a bait-only exemption to the wing possession limit restrictions; a procedure for the development, revision, and/or review of management measures on an annual, biennial, and interannual basis, including a framework adjustment process; open access permitting requirements for fishing vessels, operators, and dealers; new species-level reporting requirements for skate

vessels and dealers; new discard reporting requirements for Federal vessels; and prohibitions on possessing smooth skates in the Gulf of Maine (GOM) Regulated Mesh Area (RMA), and thorny skates and barndoor skates throughout the management unit. This proposed rule would also implement other measures for administration and enforcement. The purpose of this proposed action is to manage the NE skate complex pursuant to the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act) and the FMP and to prevent overfishing of skate resources.

**DATES:** Comments must be received at the appropriate address or fax number, (See **ADDRESSES**), on or before 5:00 p.m., local time, on July 7, 2003.

**ADDRESSES:** Written comments should be sent to Patricia A. Kurkul, Regional Administrator, NMFS, Northeast Regional Office, One Blackburn Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930. Mark the outside of the envelope, "Comments on Skate FMP." Comments also may be sent via facsimile (fax) to (978) 281-9135. Comments will not be accepted if submitted via e-mail or Internet.

Comments regarding the collection-of-information requirements contained in this proposed rule should be sent to the Regional Administrator and to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget (OMB), Washington, DC 20503 (Attn: NOAA Desk Officer).

Copies of the FMP, its Regulatory Impact Review (RIR), the Initial Regulatory Flexibility Analysis (IRFA), and the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) are available from Paul J. Howard, Executive Director, New England Fishery Management Council, 50 Water Street, The Tannery-Mill 2, Newburyport, MA 01950.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Michael Pentony, Senior Policy Analyst, 978-281-9283, fax 978-281-9135.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### Background

The FMP was developed by the New England Fishery Management Council (Council) in response to concerns that the continued harvest and increased landings in the skate fisheries required implementation of management measures to prevent overfishing and to allow for the collection of catch information on the status of the stocks. A notice of availability for the FMP was published in the **Federal Register** on May 1, 2003 (68 FR 23275). The comment period on the FMP ends on June 30, 2003.