

submitted updated regulations for receiving delegation of EPA authority for implementation and enforcement of National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants (NESHAPs) for all sources (both part 70 and non-part 70 sources). These regulations apply to certain NESHAPs promulgated by EPA, as amended through September 1, 2001 and September 1, 2002. The delegation of authority under this action does not apply to sources located in Bernalillo County, New Mexico or sources located in Indian Country. EPA is providing notice proposing to approve the delegation of certain NESHAPs to NMED.

**DATES:** Written comments must be received by January 12, 2004.

**ADDRESSES:** Comments must be submitted to Mr. Jeffery Robinson, Air Permits Section, Multimedia Planning and Permitting Division (6PD-R), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 6, 1445 Ross Avenue, Suite 700, Dallas, Texas 75202-2733. Comments may also be submitted electronically or through hand delivery/courier by following the detailed instructions in section I.C-I.F of the Supplementary Information section of the direct final rule located in the Rules section of this **Federal Register**.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mr. Jeffery Robinson, Air Permits Section, Multimedia Planning and Permitting Division (6PD-R), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 6, 1445 Ross Avenue, Suite 700, Dallas, Texas 75202-2733, at (214) 665-6435, or at [robinson.jeffrey@epa.gov](mailto:robinson.jeffrey@epa.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** In the final rules section of this **Federal Register**, EPA is approving NMED's request for delegation of authority to implement and enforce certain NESHAPs for all sources (both part 70 and non-part 70 sources). NMED has adopted certain NESHAPs by reference into New Mexico's state regulations. In addition, EPA is waiving its notification requirements so sources will only need to send notifications and reports to NMED.

The EPA is taking direct final action without prior proposal because EPA views this as a noncontroversial action and anticipates no adverse comments. A detailed rationale for this approval is set forth in the preamble to the direct final rule. If no adverse comments are received in response to this action rule, no further activity is contemplated. If EPA receives adverse comments, the direct final rule will be withdrawn, and all public comments received will be addressed in a subsequent final rule based on this proposed rule. EPA will

not institute a second comment period on this action. Any parties interested in commenting must do so at this time. Please note that if EPA receives adverse comment on an amendment, paragraph, or section of this rule and if that provision may be severed from the remainder of the rule, EPA may adopt as final those provisions of the rule that are not the subject of an adverse comment. For additional information, see the direct final rule which is published in the Rules section of this **Federal Register**.

Dated: November 26, 2003.

**Lynda F. Carroll,**

*Acting Regional Administrator, Region 6.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

#### 50 CFR Part 600

[Docket No. 031031272-3272-01; I.D. 102903A]

**RIN 0648-AR76**

#### Fisheries of the United States; Essential Fish Habitat

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

**ACTION:** Advance notice of proposed rulemaking; consideration of revision to Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) guidelines.

**SUMMARY:** NMFS is seeking public input on the EFH guidelines promulgated through regulation in the January 17, 2002, final rule. Such input is intended to fulfill NMFS' commitment to continually evaluate the efficacy of the EFH guidelines using an appropriate public process.

**DATES:** Written comments must be received no later than 5 p.m., e.s.t., on or before January 26, 2004.

**ADDRESSES:** Written comments must be sent to Mr. Rolland A. Schmitt, Director, Office of Habitat Conservation, NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service, F/HC, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910. Comments may also be sent via fax to (301) 427-2570. Comments will not be accepted if submitted via e-mail or the Internet.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Karen Abrams at (301) 713-4300 xt. 149.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** In January 2002, NMFS promulgated a final rule (67 FR 2343) that established guidelines

(50 CFR 600.805 to 600.930) to assist the Regional Fishery Management Councils (Councils) and the Secretary of Commerce (Secretary) in the description and identification of EFH in fishery management plans (FMPs), the identification of adverse effects to EFH, and the identification of actions required to conserve and enhance EFH. The final rule also detailed procedures the Secretary (acting through NMFS), other Federal agencies, and the Councils will use to coordinate, consult, or provide recommendations on Federal and state actions that may adversely affect EFH. Such guidelines promulgated through regulation were mandated in the 1996 amendments incorporated into the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1855(b)(1)(A)). The intended effect of the guidelines is to promote the protection, conservation, and enhancement of EFH.

After a 5-year public process, NMFS finalized the EFH guidelines in 2002. Nevertheless, NMFS recognized that a great deal of interest remained from various stakeholders in how to integrate habitat considerations into fishery management. As a result of this interest, NMFS committed to evaluating the efficacy of the EFH guidelines as they are implemented, to apply the lessons learned from such implementation as appropriate, and to consider changing the regulations if warranted through an appropriate public process.

NMFS recognizes that implementation of the MSA's EFH provisions is complex and requires considerable species and habitat information not always equally available across species or geography. In addition, NMFS recognizes that not all habitats exhibit the same characteristics, and that implementation of the EFH guidelines continues to attract public interest from its stakeholders.

Given ongoing interest in EFH and NMFS' commitment to evaluate the efficacy of the EFH guidelines through an appropriate public process, NMFS solicits input from the public regarding, (1) whether the EFH guidelines (50 CFR 600.805 to 600.930) should be revised and (2) if revisions are desired, what parts of the guidelines should be revised, how should they be revised, and why. NMFS will use this information in determining whether to proceed with a revision to the EFH guidelines, and, if so, the issues to be addressed.

This advance notice of proposed rulemaking has been determined to be significant for the purposes of Executive Order 12866.