

or to request special assistance, contact Janice Morgan, (202) 366-2392.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

To better prevent pipeline failures that can imperil the health and safety of nearby residents and cause significant damage to their property, RSPA/OPS is promulgating a series of rules to require pipeline operators to develop integrity management programs. The programs include conducting baseline and periodic assessments of certain pipeline segments. Although the hazardous liquid and natural gas programs are structured somewhat differently to accommodate the differences between the two types of pipeline systems, both integrity management programs are designed to identify the best method(s) for maintaining the structural soundness (*i.e.*, integrity) of pipelines operating across the United States.

On January 9, 2002, RSPA/OPS began the integrity management rulemakings for gas transmission lines by first proposing a definition of high consequence areas (*See* 67 FR 1108). We also described our plan to propose integrity management program requirements for gas transmission pipelines affecting those areas. RSPA/OPS finalized the high consequence area definition on August 6, 2002 (67 FR 50824), and published the proposed rule on integrity management program requirements on January 28, 2003 (68 FR 4278).

This meeting is being held to give participants a better understanding of the proposed rule. OPS representatives will give an overview of the proposed rule and discuss fully the identification and protection of high consequence areas and moderate risk areas; and the methodology of confirmatory direct assessment. OPS will answer any questions related to the proposed rule and will seek additional information from the public about costs and benefits of implementing the proposed rule.

The preliminary agenda for this meeting is as follows:

Pipeline safety legislation—The impact of the recently passed legislation on integrity management program requirements.

Overview of proposed regulation—The intent and structure of the proposed rule.

HCA Identification—The refinement of the definition of high consequence areas and moderate risk areas in the proposed rule.

Risk assessment, plan development, and data integration—Proposed risk assessment, with particular emphasis on confirmatory direct assessment

methods, and the proposed plan development process, identification of high consequence areas and moderate risk areas; confirmatory direct assessment methods; assessment schedules, and criteria for the performance approach to the program.

IMP Implementation & Data Integration

Costs and benefits—The draft regulatory evaluation.

Open Forum & Q&A

Issued in Washington, DC, on February 26, 2003.

Stacey L. Gerard,

Associate Administrator for Pipeline Safety.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 600

[Docket No. 030128024-3024-01; I.D. 121002A]

RIN 0648-AQ63

Fisheries of the United States; National Standard 1

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

ACTION: Advance notice of proposed rulemaking; consideration of revision to national standard 1 guidelines; extension of comment period.

SUMMARY: NMFS extends the public comment period on an advanced notice of proposed rulemaking that announces that the agency is considering revisions to the national standard guidelines for national standard 1 that specify criteria for determining overfishing and establishing rebuilding schedules. Because the scientific community, fisheries managers, the fishing industry, and environmental groups expressed concern about the appropriateness of some aspects of national standard 1 guidelines, particularly in light of new issues arising from rebuilding programs that have been underway for several years, this action solicits public input on the effectiveness and appropriateness of these guidelines in complying with the requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act).

DATES: Comment period is extended from March 17, 2003, to April 16, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Comments may be mailed to Mr. John H. Dunnigan, Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Room 13362, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910; or faxed to 301-713-1193. Comments will not be accepted if submitted via e-mail or Internet.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mark R. Millikin, at 301-713-2341 or via e-mail at Mark.Millikin@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The preamble of the advance notice of proposed rulemaking (ANPR)(68 FR 7492, February 14, 2003) is republished here in its entirety for the convenience of the public. This action extends the public comment period of the ANPR another 30 days, from March 17, 2003, to April 16, 2003.

National standard 1 reads, "Conservation and management measures shall prevent overfishing while achieving, on a continuing basis, the optimum yield from each fishery for the United States fishing industry." In 1996, the Sustainable Fisheries Act (SFA) amended the Magnuson-Stevens Act (16 U.S.C. 1801, *et seq.*) to, among other things, provide definitions for "overfishing" and modify the definition of "optimum yield." The Magnuson-Stevens Act, in section 303(a)(10), now requires each fishery management plan (FMP) to "specify objective and measurable criteria for identifying when the fishery to which the FMP applies is overfished." In addition, section 304(e) specifies requirements for rebuilding overfished fisheries. The revised national standard guidelines, including national standard 1, were proposed at 62 FR 41907, August 4, 1997, and published as final guidelines at 63 FR 24212, May 1, 1998.

As they currently exist, the national standard 1 guidelines provide definitions and require determination, to the extent possible, of maximum sustainable yield (MSY), or an acceptable surrogate; specification of status determination criteria including a maximum fishing mortality threshold and a minimum stock size threshold; ending overfishing and rebuilding overfished stocks; and specification of optimum yield (OY) in fisheries.

In response to the SFA, these national standard guidelines were implemented in 1998, over 5 years ago. Since that time, we have developed new perspectives, new issues, and new problems regarding their application. Concerns that have been identified for possible revision include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. The definition and use of the minimum stock size threshold (MSST) for determining when a stock is