

**BILLING CODE 3510-22-P**

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

**RIN 0648-XE985**

**Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; Advisory Panel**

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

**ACTION:** Notice; solicitation of nominations.

**SUMMARY:** NMFS solicits nominations for the Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Advisory Panel (AP). NMFS consults with and considers the comments and views of the HMS AP when preparing and implementing Fishery Management Plans (FMPs) or FMP amendments for Atlantic tunas, swordfish, sharks, and billfish. Nominations are being sought to fill approximately one-third (11) of the seats on the HMS AP for a 3-year appointment. Individuals with definable interests in the recreational and commercial fishing and related industries, environmental community, academia, and non-governmental organizations are considered for membership on the HMS AP.

**DATES:** Nominations must be received on or before [*Insert date 30 days after publication in the Federal Register*].

**ADDRESSES:** You may submit nominations and requests for the Advisory Panel Statement of Organization, Practices, and Procedures by any of the following methods:

- Email: [HMSAP.Nominations@noaa.gov](mailto:HMSAP.Nominations@noaa.gov). Include in the subject line the following identifier: “HMS AP Nominations.”
- Mail: Margo Schulze-Haugen, Highly Migratory Species Management Division, NMFS SF1, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Peter Cooper at (301) 427-8503.

## **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

### **Introduction**

The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act), 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*, as amended by the Sustainable Fisheries Act, Public Law 104-297, provided that the Secretary may establish Advisory Panels to assist in the collection and evaluation of information relevant to the development of any Fishery Management Plan (FMP) or FMP amendment for any highly migratory species fishery that is under the Secretary’s authority. NMFS has consulted with the HMS AP on: Amendment 1 to the Billfish FMP (April 1999); the HMS FMP (April 1999); Amendment 1 to the HMS FMP (December 2003); the 2006 Consolidated HMS FMP (October 2006); Amendments 1, 2, 3, 4, 5a, 5b, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 to the 2006 Consolidated HMS FMP (April and October 2008, February and September 2009, May and September 2010, April and September 2011, March and September 2012, January and September 2013, April and September 2014, March and September 2015, and March and September 2016); among other relevant fishery management issues.

### **Procedures and Guidelines**

#### *A. Nomination Procedures for Appointments to the Advisory Panel*

Nomination packages should include:

1. The name of the nominee and a description of his/her interest in HMS or HMS fisheries, or in particular species of sharks, swordfish, tunas, or billfish;
2. Contact information, including mailing address, phone, and email of the nominee;
3. A statement of background and/or qualifications;
4. A written commitment that the nominee shall actively participate in good faith, and consistent with ethics obligations, in the meetings and tasks of the HMS AP; and
5. A list of outreach resources that the nominee has at his/her disposal to communicate HMS issues to various interest groups.

### **Qualifications for HMS AP Membership**

Qualification for membership includes one or more of the following: 1) experience in HMS recreational fisheries; 2) experience in HMS commercial fisheries; 3) experience in fishery-related industries (*e.g.*, marinas, bait and tackle shops); 4) experience in the scientific community working with HMS; and/or 5) representation of a private, non-governmental, regional, national, or international organization representing marine fisheries, or environmental, governmental, or academic interests dealing with HMS.

### **Tenure for the HMS AP**

Member tenure will be for 3 years (36 months), with approximately one-third of the members' terms expiring on December 31 of each year. Nominations are sought for terms beginning January 2017 and expiring December 2019.

### ***B. Participants***

Nominations for the HMS AP will be accepted to allow representation from commercial and recreational fishing interests, academic/scientific interests, and the environmental/non-

governmental organization community, who are knowledgeable about Atlantic HMS and/or Atlantic HMS fisheries. Current representation on the HMS AP, as shown in Table 1, consists of 12 members representing commercial interests, 12 members representing recreational interests, 4 members representing environmental interests, 4 academic representatives, and the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) Advisory Committee Chairperson. Each HMS AP member serves a 3-year term with approximately one-third of the total number of seats (33) expiring on December 31 of each year. NMFS seeks to fill 3 commercial, 5 recreational, and 2 environmental organization vacancies by December 31, 2016. NMFS will seek to fill vacancies based primarily on maintaining the current representation from each of the sectors. NMFS also considers species expertise and representation from the fishing regions (Northeast, Mid-Atlantic, Southeast, Gulf of Mexico, and Caribbean) to ensure the diversity and balance of the AP. Table 1 includes the current representation on the HMS AP by sector, region, and species with terms that are expiring identified in bold. It is not meant to indicate that NMFS will only consider persons who have expertise in the species or fishing regions that are listed. Rather, NMFS will aim toward having as diverse and balanced an AP as possible.

**Table 1. Current Representation on the HMS AP by Sector, Region, and Species.** (Terms that are expiring or for whom current members are stepping down are in bold. NMFS tries to maintain diversity and balance in representation among fishing regions and species.)

<b>Sector</b>	<b>Fishing Region</b>	<b>Species</b>	<b>Date Appointed</b>	<b>Date Term Expires</b>
Academic	All	Swordfish/Tuna	1/1/2015	12/31/2017
Academic	All	Tuna	1/1/2016	12/31/2018
Academic	Southeast/Gulf of Mexico	Shark	1/1/2016	12/31/2018
Academic	Southeast	Swordfish/HMS	1/1/2016	12/31/2018
<b>Commercial</b>	<b>Mid-Atlantic</b>	<b>HMS/Shark</b>	<b>1/1/2014</b>	<b>12/31/2016</b>
<b>Commercial</b>	<b>Northeast</b>	<b>Swordfish/Tuna</b>	<b>1/1/2014</b>	<b>12/31/2016</b>
<b>Commercial</b>	<b>Gulf of Mexico</b>	<b>Shark</b>	<b>1/1/2014</b>	<b>12/31/2016</b>
Commercial	Gulf of Mexico	Shark	1/1/2015	12/31/2017
Commercial	Mid-Atlantic	HMS	1/1/2015	12/31/2017
Commercial	Northeast	Tuna/Swordfish	1/1/2015	12/31/2017
Commercial	Gulf of Mexico	Tuna/Swordfish	1/1/2015	12/31/2017
Commercial	Northeast	Tuna	1/1/2015	12/31/2017
Commercial	Northeast	Tuna	1/1/2015	12/31/2017
Commercial	Southeast	Shark	1/1/2016	12/31/2018
Commercial	Southeast	Swordfish/Tuna	1/1/2016	12/31/2018
Commercial	Northeast	Tuna	1/1/2016	12/31/2018
<b>Environmental</b>	<b>All</b>	<b>Tuna</b>	<b>1/1/2014</b>	<b>12/31/2016</b>
<b>Environmental</b>	<b>All</b>	<b>HMS</b>	<b>1/1/2015</b>	<b>12/31/2017</b>
Environmental	All	Shark	1/1/2015	12/31/2017
Environmental	All	HMS	1/1/2016	12/31/2018
<b>Recreational</b>	<b>Northeast</b>	<b>HMS</b>	<b>1/1/2013</b>	<b>12/31/2016</b>
<b>Recreational</b>	<b>Northeast</b>	<b>Tuna</b>	<b>1/1/2014</b>	<b>12/31/2016</b>
<b>Recreational</b>	<b>Mid-Atlantic</b>	<b>HMS</b>	<b>1/1/2014</b>	<b>12/31/2016</b>
<b>Recreational</b>	<b>Southeast</b>	<b>Billfish</b>	<b>1/1/2014</b>	<b>12/31/2016</b>
<b>Recreational</b>	<b>Gulf of Mexico</b>	<b>HMS</b>	<b>1/1/2014</b>	<b>12/31/2016</b>
Recreational	Gulf of Mexico/Southeast	Billfish	1/1/2015	12/31/2017
Recreational	Mid-Atlantic	Shark	1/1/2015	12/31/2017
Recreational	Mid-Atlantic	Tuna	1/1/2015	12/31/2017
Recreational	Northeast	Tuna/Shark	1/1/2016	12/31/2018
Recreational	Northeast	HMS	1/1/2016	12/31/2018
Recreational	Mid-Atlantic	HMS	1/1/2016	12/31/2018
Recreational	Southeast	Billfish/HMS	1/1/2016	12/31/2018

The intent is to have a group that, as a whole, reflects an appropriate and equitable balance and mix of interests given the responsibilities of the HMS AP.

Five additional members on the HMS AP include one member representing each of the following Councils: New England Fishery Management Council, the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, and the Caribbean Fishery Management Council. The HMS AP also includes 22 ex-officio participants: 20 representatives of the coastal states and two representatives of the interstate commissions (the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission and the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission).

NMFS will provide the necessary administrative support, including technical assistance, for the HMS AP. However, NMFS will not compensate participants with monetary support of any kind. Depending on availability of funds, members may be reimbursed for travel costs related to the HMS AP meetings.

### *C. Meeting Schedule*

Meetings of the HMS AP will be held as frequently as necessary but are routinely held twice each year—once in the spring, and once in the fall. The meetings may be held in conjunction with public hearings.

Dated: November 3, 2016

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