



Press Release

Contact: Paul Dalzell (808) 522-8220 or Paul.Dalzell@noaa.gov
John Calvo (671) 688-6400 or John.Calvo@noaa.gov
Jack Ogumoro (670) 322-9830 or Jack.Ogumoro@noaa.gov

Federal Fishery Managers Agree on Measures for Marine National Monuments, Non-Commercial Permit Exemptions for Western Pacific Region

TUMON BAY, GUAM (30 March 2010) The Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council at the Guam Hilton at Tumon Bay, Guam, on Friday concluded a week-long meeting on fishery management measures for the US Pacific islands, including the Marianas Trench and Pacific Remote Islands Area (PRIA) Marine National Monuments (MNM). Earlier in the week, the Council had made similar decisions for the Rose Atoll MNM, located in American Samoa. All three MNMs were created in January 2009 by Presidential proclamation that closed commercial fishing but allowed for other types of fishing activity. The Council is mandated by Congress to manage fisheries in the Western Pacific Region, which includes federal waters (generally 3 to 200 miles from shore) around Hawaii, Guam, CNMI, American Samoa and the PRIA. Decisions by the Council are transmitted to the Secretary of Commerce for final approval.

Regarding fishing in the MNMs, the Council defined the following terms:

- Non-commercial Fishing: Fishing that does not meet the Magnuson-Stevens Fisheries Conservation and Magnuson Act definition of commercial fishing and includes, but is not limited to, sustenance, subsistence, traditional indigenous, and recreational fishing;
- Recreational Fishing: Fishing conducted for sport or pleasure; and
- Customary Exchange: Non-market exchange of marine resources between fishers and community residents for goods and/or services for cultural, social or religious reasons and may include cost recovery through monetary reimbursements and other means for actual trip expenses (e.g., ice, bait, food, fuel) that may be necessary to participate in the fisheries in the Western Pacific Region.

For the MNMs in general, the Council agreed to the following measures:

- Allow recreational and charter for-hire fishing, but the catch cannot be sold, bartered or traded nor included in customary exchange; and
- Establish a separate permit and logbook requirements for for-hire fishing to monitor the sustainability of this type of fishing as well as potentially limit the number of participants.

For the Marianas Trench MNM in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), the Council recommended the following:

- In the Islands Unit, i.e., the three northernmost islands in the CNMI chain:
 - authorize fishing conducted for sustenance, subsistence or traditional indigenous purposes or uses as allowed for under customary exchange of fish;
 - require permits and catch reporting for all fishing in the MNM and to include the CNMI Department of Lands and Natural Resources (DLNR) in the administration and monitoring of the permits and logbooks; and
 - exempt the CNMI DLNR Division of Fish and Wildlife from permit requirements related to scientific research or exploration;

---more---

Measures for Marine National Monuments, Permit Exemptions 2-2-2-2-2

- Include representation from Guam as an observer in the Marianas Trench MNM Advisory Council; and
- Consider options for regulating commercial fishing in the Volcanic and Trench Units of the Marianas MNM as well as other fisheries related issues identified in the Presidential proclamation that created the monument when the Council meets June 28 to July 1, 2010, in Honolulu.

For the PRIA MNM, the Council recommended the following measures:

- Allow non-commercial and recreational fishing;
- Establish no-take marine protected areas from 0-12 nautical miles around Baker, Howland, and Jarvis Islands, Kingman Reef, and Johnston, Palmyra, and Wake atolls;
- Maintain existing federal permit and logbook requirements for fishery participants targeting pelagic, bottomfish, crustaceans, and coral reef management unit species;
- For consistency, have the US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) adopt or continue these permit and reporting requirements for areas under their jurisdiction; and
- Have the National Marine Fisheries Service and USFWS work on a comprehensive outreach, education and compliance program for potential fishermen, visitors and researchers that spend time in the monument.

The Council on Friday also voted to allow exemptions to non-commercial federal permitting in the Western Pacific Region. As preliminarily preferred alternatives, the Council is looking to exempt permit requirements and permit fees for fishers less than 16 years of age. The Council will review these and other exemption options to non-commercial federal fishing permits when it reconvenes in June. It will also at that time consider exemptions for other types of federal fishing permits in the Western Pacific Region as well as options to facilitate fisheries catch information if any permit and logbook requirements are exempted.

For more on the Council meeting, visit the Council's website at www.wpcouncil.org or contact the Council by phone (808) 522-8220, fax (808) 522-8226 or email info.wpcouncil@noaa.gov.

Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council Members:

Appointees by the Secretary of Commerce from nominees selected by Hawaii, Guam, American Samoa and CNMI governors: Stephen Haleck, business owner (American Samoa) (Chair); William Sword, recreational fisherman (American Samoa) (Vice Chair); Manuel Duenas, Guam Fishermen's Cooperative Association (Guam) (Vice Chair); David Itano, researcher (Hawaii) (Vice Chair); Benigno Sablan, cultural practitioner (CNMI) (Vice Chair); Frederick Duerr, resort and hotel consultant (Hawaii); Sean Martin, Pacific Ocean Producers (Hawaii); and Peter Young, environmental consultant (Hawaii).

Designated state officials: Ignacio Dela Cruz, CNMI Department of Lands and Natural Resources; Joe Torres, Guam Department of Agriculture; Laura Thielen, Hawaii Department of Land & Natural Resources; and Ray Tulafono, American Samoa Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources.

Designated federal officials: Bill Robinson, NMFS Pacific Islands Regional Office; Don Palawski, US Fish and Wildlife; RAdm Manson K. Brown, District Commander, U.S. Coast Guard 14th District; and Bill Gibbons-Fly, US Department of State.