UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
PROGRAM PLANNING AND INTEGRATION
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

MAY 8 2012

To All Interested Government Agencies and Public Groups:

Under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), an environmental review has been performed on the following action.

TITLE: 2012 Spiny Dogfish Specifications

LOCATION: Exclusive Economic Zone off the Northeastern U.S.

SUMMARY: This action would specify the annual catch and possession limits for the spiny dogfish fishery for the 2012 fishing year, reflecting updated scientific information on the status of the stock. The commercial quota would be specified at 35.694 million lb, a 78-percent increase from 2011. The possession limit would remain at the status quo level of 3,000 lb per trip, reducing the likelihood of fishery closures in 2012. The action is expected to have neutral impacts on target, non-target, and protected species, and habitat relative to no action, because it would not likely change the distribution or magnitude of total fishing effort in fisheries that catch spiny dogfish. However, positive economic and social impacts are expected, given that the increased quota will maximize the opportunities to land dogfish that would otherwise have to be discarded, increasing potential fishing revenues.

RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL: Daniel S. Morris
Acting Regional Administrator
National Marine Fisheries Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930
978-281-9250

The environmental review process led us to conclude that this action will not have a significant impact on the environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement was not prepared. A copy of the finding of no significant impact (FONSI), including the environmental assessment (EA), is enclosed for your information.

Although NOAA is not soliciting comments on this completed EA/FONSI, we will consider any comments submitted that would assist us in preparing future NEPA documents. Please submit any written comments to the Responsible Official named above.

Sincerely,

for Patricia A. Montanio
NOAA NEPA Coordinator

Enclosure

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