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

MAR 12 2012

To All Interested Government Agencies and Public Groups:

Under the National Environmental Policy Act, an environmental review was conducted for the following action.

TITLE: Regulatory Amendment: Modifications to the American Samoa Large Vessel Prohibited Areas, Including an Environmental Assessment and Regulatory Impact Review

LOCATION: U.S. EEZ around American Samoa

SUMMARY: The Western Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) prepared this amendment and environmental assessment (EA) to consider alternatives for modifying certain boundaries of a large vessel prohibited fishing area around American Samoa. The Council recommended that NMFS modify the boundaries of the large vessel prohibited area around Tutuila, the Manua Islands, and Rose Atoll. NMFS proposes to implement the Council's recommendation (preferred Alternative 4) to move the northern boundary toward shore and move the eastern boundary and a portion of the southern boundary farther from shore to align with boundaries of the Rose Atoll Marine National Monument (shown in Figure 4 in the attached EA). The environmental review was conducted with public input, and found that the proposed action would not result in substantial changes to the fisheries operating around American Samoa. The combined regulatory amendment and EA, identified by RIN 0648-BB45, is available at www.regulations.gov or from the following address:

RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL: Michael D. Tosatto
Regional Administrator
NOAA NMFS Pacific Islands Region
1601 Kapiolani Blvd. 1110
Honolulu, HI 96814
Tel (808) 944-2200; Fax (808) 973-2941

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

Although NOAA is not soliciting comments on this completed EA and 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,

Patricia A. Montanio
NEPA Coordinator

Enclosure

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