



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Southwest Region
501 West Ocean Boulevard, Suite 4200
Long Beach, California 90802-4213

JUL 22 2013

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Dear West Coast Swordfish Fishery Stakeholder:

NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) will convene an informational meeting on August 1, 2013, to provide an overview of the recently completed biological opinion (BiOp) for the west coast large mesh swordfish/thresher shark drift gillnet (DGN) fishery. The overview will include information on the mandatory terms and conditions included in the BiOp and a discussion of Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) implications stemming from two sperm whales that were observed entangled in DGN gear in 2010. As a result of extrapolated estimates stemming from these takes, in combination with the current Potential Biological Removal levels for the CA/OR/WA stock of sperm whales, which are annually set to ensure optimal sustainable levels for this endangered stock, a Negligible Impact Determination cannot be made for the DGN fishery as it is currently configured. Based on this information, the associated MMPA 101(a)(5)(E) permit to allow for the take of small numbers of sperm whales will not be issued. NMFS is considering implementation of emergency conservation measures to address these MMPA implications and will present background information at the meeting. Staff from the NMFS Protected Resources and Sustainable Fisheries Division as well as marine mammal scientists from the NMFS Southwest Fisheries Science Center in La Jolla will be on hand to present information and to answer questions. The meeting will convene **at 9 a.m. on Thursday August 1, 2013, at the Wyndham San Diego Bayside, 1355 N. Harbor Dr., San Diego, CA 92101.**

If you have any questions regarding the scheduled meeting, please contact Craig Heberer at (760) 805-5984 (Craig.Heberer@noaa.gov).

Sincerely,

Mark Helvey,
Assistant Regional Administrator

