

NATIONAL OCEAN SERVICE BRIEFING – DEEP SEA MINERAL MINING

The Deep Seabed Hard Minerals Resources Act (DSHMRA) establishes the authority and permitting structure for U.S. citizens or companies pursuing deep-sea mineral mining activities outside the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). The DSHMRA authorizes the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Administrator to issue exploration licenses and commercial recovery permits, and describes (Section 1415(d)) consultation requirements with regional fishery management councils if “*the activities undertaken pursuant to such license or permit could adversely affect any fishery within the Fishery Conservation Zone or any anadromous species or Continental Shelf fishery resource subject to the exclusive management authority of the United States beyond such zone.*” NOAA’s National Ocean Service (NOS) provides the review and processing of exploration licenses or commercial recovery permit applications, with final approval by the NOAA Administrator. Additional background and information on permit applications can be found on the NOS Deepsea Hard Minerals Mining [webpage](#).

The April 4, 2025, [Executive Order 14285 Unleashing America’s Offshore Critical Minerals and Resources](#) signaled renewed federal support for deep-sea mining activities, building on authorities established under current law. A [related final rule](#) that accelerates the permitting timeline for deep seabed mining applications was issued January 21, 2026.

NOS representative Bryan Cole will brief the Council on elements of the DSHMRA and the consultation process. The Council should consider the information included in the briefing, any supplemental Advisory Body reports, and discuss next steps, as appropriate.

Council Tasks:

- 1. Consider DSHMRA Consultation Requirements and Fishery Resources Potentially Adversely Affected.**
- 2. Discussion and Comment, as Appropriate.**

Reference Materials:

1. If received, Public Comments are electronic only ([see e-portal](#)).

Agenda Order:

- D.1 National Ocean Service Briefing – Deep Sea Mineral Mining
 - a. National Ocean Service
 - b. Reports and Comments of Management Entities and Advisory Bodies
 - c. Public Comment
 - d. Council Discussion and Comment, As Appropriate

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