

mortality assumptions. Furthermore, discussions have been and are being held with selected individuals concerning trapper behavior, and information obtained on the percentage of individuals trapping beaver in Missouri. The Service also is reviewing other published references including ones on the impact of market dynamics on Missouri's furbearer harvest system and on an examination of variables influencing the fur harvest in Missouri.

In addition to the information regarding Missouri since the comment period, the Service has received, will consider, and may rely upon additional information contained in letters and documents submitted by several States as part of the annual monitoring described in the January 5, 1984, Federal Register (49 FR 590), including information that was solicited in advance from the State of Tennessee.

#### Proposed Export Decision

As stated in the April 2, 1996, Federal Register (61 FR 14543), the Service proposes to approve exports of Missouri river otters harvested during the 1996-97 and subsequent harvest seasons, on the grounds that both Scientific Authority and Management Authority criteria have been satisfied. In case a decision is made to approve exports, the Service may issue its Scientific Authority and Management Authority findings for 1 or more years in an administrative decision document, or publish such findings in a Federal Register notice.

#### Comments Solicited

The Service again requests comments on these proposed findings for Missouri

and the proposed rulemaking adding Missouri to the list of States approved for export of river otters (61 FR 14543). The final decision on the proposed rule will take into account comments received and any additional information received. Such consideration may lead to findings different from those presented in the proposal.

The reopened comment period on the proposed rule is issued under authority of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*). The author of this notification is Dr. Charles W. Dane, Office of Scientific Authority.

#### List of Subjects in 50 CFR Part 23

Endangered and threatened species, Exports, Imports, Treaties.

Dated: October 2, 1996.

John G. Rogers,

*Acting Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.*

[FR Doc. 96-25664 Filed 10-2-96; 3:48 pm]

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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

#### 50 CFR Parts 217 and 222

[Docket No. 960730211-6211-01; I.D. 072296B]

RIN 0648-AJ03

#### Environmental Assessment on North Atlantic Right Whale Protection

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and

Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

**ACTION:** Proposed rule; availability of environmental assessment.

**SUMMARY:** NMFS announces the availability of the Environmental Assessment (EA) on a proposed rule limiting the approach to northern right whales (*Eubalaena glacialis*).

**DATES:** The comment period on the proposed rule ends on November 5, 1996.

**ADDRESSES:** Requests for copies of the EA should be sent to Dean Wilkinson, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910-3226.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Dean Wilkinson at (301) 713-2322.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** On August 7, 1996, a proposed rule was published in the Federal Register to prohibit vessel and aircraft approaches within 500 yards (460 m) of northern right whales (61 FR 41116). At that time, NMFS stated that an EA on the proposed rule was in preparation. The EA is now available. Copies of the EA or the proposed rule can be obtained from the Office of Protected Resources, NMFS (see **ADDRESSES**). The public comment period on the proposed rule will end on November 5, 1996.

Dated: October 1, 1996.

Nancy Foster,

*Deputy Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.*

[FR Doc. 96-25580 Filed 10-04-96; 8:45 am]

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