

Dated: December 17, 1996.

Robert C. Keeney,

*Director, Fruit and Vegetable Division.*

[FR Doc. 96-32852 Filed 12-24-96; 8:45 am]

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### Forest Service

#### Red Mountain Project—Twin, Muddy Creek, and Gee Timber Sales, Wallowa-Whitman National Forest, Baker County, Oregon

**AGENCY:** Forest Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Cancellation of a notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement.

**SUMMARY:** On December 17, 1990, a notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) for the Red Mountain Project, on the Baker District of the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest, was published in the Federal Register (55 FR 51739). A notice of availability for the draft EIS for the Red Mountain Project was published in the Federal Register on March 8, 1996 (61 FR 9450). USDA, Forest Service, has decided to cancel the preparation of a final EIS analyzing timber sale proposals and related activities within an unloaded portion of the east face of Elkhorn Ridge. The notice of intent is hereby rescinded.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:** Questions may be addressed to Joanne Britton, Environmental Coordinator, Baker Ranger District, 3165 10th Street, Baker City, Oregon, 97814, telephone: 541-523-4476.

Dated: December 10, 1996.

R.M. Richmond,

*Forest Supervisor.*

[FR Doc. 96-32714 Filed 12-24-96; 8:45 am]

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#### Olympic Provincial Interagency Executive Committee (PIEC), Advisory Committee

**AGENCY:** Forest Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice of meeting.

**SUMMARY:** The Olympic PIEC Advisory Committee will meet on January 24, 1997 at the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribal Community Center, 1033 Old Blyn Highway, Sequim, Washington. The meeting will begin at 9:30 a.m. and continue until 3:00 p.m. Agenda topics to be covered include: (1) Review of Field Trip; (2) Quilcene District Overview of Watershed Analysis, Projects, Access & Travel Management Updates; (3) Second half of FY97 Priorities for Restoration Projects; (4)

Regional Ecosystem Office: role and relation to PACs; (5) Adaptive Management Area planning and strategies; (6) Open Forum; and (7) Public Comments. All Olympic Province Advisory Committee meetings are open to the public. Interested citizens are encouraged to attend.

#### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Direct questions regarding this meeting to Kate Snow, Province Liaison, USDA, Quilcene Ranger District, P.O. Box 280, Quilcene, WA 98376, (360) 765-2211 or Ronald R. Humphrey, Forest Supervisor, at (360) 956-2301.

Dated: December 18, 1996.

Ronald R. Humphrey,

*Forest Supervisor.*

[FR Doc. 96-32848 Filed 12-24-96; 8:45 am]

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### DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

#### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 121996A]

#### Small Takes of Ringed Seals Incidental to On-Ice Seismic Activity

**AGENCY:** National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

**ACTION:** Notice of issuance of letters of authorization.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) as amended, and implementing regulations, notification is hereby given that letters of authorization to take ringed seals incidental to on-ice seismic operations in the Beaufort Sea off Alaska were issued on December 19, 1996, to BP Exploration, Western Geophysical, and Northern Geophysical of America, all of Anchorage, AK.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** These letters of authorization are effective from January 1, 1997, through May 31, 1997.

**ADDRESSES:** The applications and letters are available for review in the following offices: Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910 and Western Alaska Field Office, NMFS, 701 C Street, Anchorage, AK 99513.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Kenneth R. Hollingshead, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, (301) 713-2055 or Ron Morris, Western Alaska Field Office, NMFS, (907) 271-5006.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Section 101(a)(5)(A) of the MMPA (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*) directs NMFS to allow, on

request, the incidental, but not intentional, taking of small numbers of marine mammals by U.S. citizens who engage in a specified activity (other than commercial fishing) within a specified geographical region, if certain findings are made and regulations are issued. Under the MMPA, the term "taking" means to harass, hunt, capture or kill or to attempt to harass, hunt, capture or kill marine mammals.

Permission may be granted for periods up to 5 years if the Secretary of Commerce finds, after notification and opportunity for public comment, that the taking will have a negligible impact on the species or stock(s) of marine mammals and will not have an unmitigable adverse impact on the availability of the species or stock(s) for subsistence uses. In addition, NMFS must prescribe regulations that include permissible methods of taking and other means effecting the least practicable adverse impact on the species and its habitat and on the availability of the species for subsistence uses, paying particular attention to rookeries, mating grounds and areas of similar significance. The regulations must include requirements pertaining to the monitoring and reporting of such taking. Regulations governing the taking of ringed seals incidental to on-ice seismic activities were published on January 13, 1993 (58 FR 4091), and remain in effect until December 31, 1997.

#### Summary of Requests

NMFS received requests for letters of authorization on the dates specified from (1) Northern Geophysical of America, 2361 Cinnabar Loop, Anchorage, AK 99507 (September 10, 1996), (2) Western Geophysical Inc. 351 E. International Airport Road, Anchorage, AK 99518-1299 (September 18, 1996), and (3) BP Exploration (Alaska) Inc., 900 East Benson Blvd. P.O. Box 196612, Anchorage, AK 99519-6612 (October 7, 1996). All letters request a take by harassment of a small number of ringed seals incidental to on-ice seismic work in the Beaufort Sea, AK.

Issuance of these letters of authorization is based on findings that the total takings will have a negligible impact on the ringed seal species or stock and will not have an unmitigable adverse impact on the availability of this species for subsistence uses.

Dated: December 19, 1996.

Patricia Montanio,

*Acting Director, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.*

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