

may specify their own testing or adopt other techniques for evaluating conference to these specifications.

Information on the test methods and procedures for conformance testing are available in the Validated Products List (VPL) on the internet Universal Resource Locator (URL) address ftp://speckle.ncsl.nist.gov/vpl/intro.htm. NIST test suites and testing procedures are distributed freely via the World Wide Web (WWW) Universal Resource Locator (URL) http://www.nist.gov/div897/ctg.

DATES: The effective date for terminating validation services for FIPS 127-2, SQL, and FIPS 128-2, CGM (CAL), is July 1, 1997. Comments on terminating validation services for FIPS 21-4, COBOL; FIPS 69-1, Fortran; FIPS 128-2, CGM (ATA); FIPS 151-2, POSIX; and FIPS 160, C, must be received no later than May 8, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Written comments concerning the termination should be sent to: Director, Information Technology Laboratory, Attn: Validation Services, Building 820, Room 562, National Institute of Standards and Technology, Gaithersburg, MD 20899. Electronic comments should be sent to: fips.comments@nist.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION OR COMMENTS CONTACT:

Ms. Lynne Rosenthal, National Institute of Standards and Technology, Gaithersburg, MD 20899, telephone (301) 975-3283, email lsr@nist.gov.

Authority: Federal Information Processing Standards Publications (FIPS PUBS) are issued by the National Institute of Standards and Technology after approval by the Secretary of Commerce pursuant to Section 5131 of the Information Technology Management Reform Act of 1996, Public Law 104-106, and the Computer Security Act of 1987.

Elaine Buntin-Mines,

Director, Program Office.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 040197C]

Northern Right Whale Protection; Endangered and Threatened Marine Mammals

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

ACTION: Notice of petition and determination.

SUMMARY: On August 26, 1996, NMFS received a petition from Mr. Richard Max Strahan representing GreenWorld, Inc., requesting that NMFS and the U.S. Coast Guard undertake a variety of actions to protect and preserve marine wildlife and, in particular, the northern right whale (*Eubalaena glacialis*). The petition was amended on September 18, 1996.

NMFS has denied the petition from GreenWorld, Inc., because it does not contain substantial information indicating that the petitioned actions may be warranted.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Robert C. Ziobro, Protected Species Management Division, Office of Protected Resources, East-West Highway, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910 (301-713-1401).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On August 26, 1996, NMFS received a notice of intent to bring suit under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) on a petition for proposed regulations from Mr. Strahan. On September 18, 1996, Mr. Strahan amended his original petition to add another provision to his list of requested actions. The notice and petition was addressed both to officials at NMFS and the U.S. Coast Guard.

The following is a brief summary of some of the primary elements of the petition and the request for relief in Mr. Strahan's letters that appear to be directed to NMFS, or to NMFS and the U.S. Coast Guard: Issue a letter to coastal state government agencies informing them that they are in violation of the ESA and must apply to NMFS for a section 10 permit or face U.S. Coast Guard enforcement action; issue an emergency rule followed by a permanent rule banning fixed fishing gear in right whale critical habitat; promulgate and enforce a rule banning all gillnets and aquaculture projects; promulgate a rule allowing other types of fishing gear in right whale critical habitat areas only pursuant to a section 10 incidental take permit and a small take authorization pursuant to section 101 of the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA); and comply with the mandatory and non-discretionary duties imposed under section 7(a) of the ESA and utilize all statutory and regulatory authorities to adopt and implement a conservation plan to enforce the take prohibitions of the ESA and MMPA to stop marine fisheries licensed and regulated by States from incidentally taking northern right whales and other Federally protected whales taken incidentally in State fishery activities

along the Atlantic and Pacific Coastlines of the U.S.

NMFS has evaluated the petition and request for relief and determined that they do not contain substantial information that the requested actions may be warranted. NMFS notes, however, that efforts are underway to reduce incidental takes in commercial fisheries, including State regulated fisheries, under section 118 of the MMPA. For example, a large whale take reduction team was formed and notice thereof published in the **Federal Register** on August 6, 1996 (61 FR 40819) to address incidental takings of certain large whale species that occur or may occur in several fisheries. NMFS filed a proposed Large Whale Take Reduction Plan at the Federal Register on April 1, 1997, and Mr. Strahan and others are invited to comment on that plan.

Dated: April 1, 1997.

Charles Karnella,

Acting Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 97-8860 Filed 4-7-97; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 040297D]

Endangered Species; Permits

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

ACTION: Receipt of four applications for scientific research permits (P772#71, P639, P640, P641).

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the Southwest Fisheries Science Center, Tiburon Laboratory, NMFS at Tiburon, CA (SWFSC); Point Reyes National Seashore and Golden Gate National Recreation Area, National Park Service at San Francisco, CA (PR/GG); the Marin Municipal Water District at Corte Madera, CA (MMWD); and the Sonoma County Water Agency at Santa Rosa, CA (SCWA) have applied in due form for permits authorizing takes of a threatened species for scientific research purposes.

DATES: Written comments or requests for a public hearing on any of these applications must be received on or before May 8, 1997.

ADDRESSES: The applications and related documents are available for