

(8) Valentine, NE WSO which will be automated at FAA Weather Observation Service Level D and with services being provided by the future North Platte WFO;

(9) Victoria, TX WSO which will be automated at FAA Weather Observation Service Level D and with services being provided by the future Corpus Christi, Austin/San Antonio, and Houston/Galveston WFOs;

(10) Wichita Falls, TX WSO which will be automated at FAA Weather Observation Service Level D and with services being provided by the future Oklahoma City and Dallas/Fort Worth WFOs; and

(11) Winnemucca, NV WSO which will be automated at FAA Weather Observation Service Level D and with services being provided by the future Elko WFO.

In accordance with Public Law 102-567, the public will have 60-day in which to comment on these proposed automation and closure certifications.

DATES: Comments are requested by December 1, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Requests for copies of the proposes automation and closure packages should be sent to Tom Beaver, Room 11426, 1325 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910, telephone 301-713-0300. All comments should be sent to Tom Beaver at the above address.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Tom Beaver at 301-713-0300.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In accordance with section 706 of Pub. L. 102-567, the Secretary of Commerce must certify that these automations and closures will not result in any degradation of service to the affected areas of responsibility and must publish the proposed automation and closure certifications in the FR. The documentation supporting each proposed certification includes the following:

(1) A draft memorandum by the meteorologist(s)-in-charge recommending the certification, the final of which will be endorsed by the Regional Director and the Assistant Administrator of the NWS if appropriate, after consideration of public comments and completion of consultation with the Modernization Transition Committee (the Committee);

(2) A description of local weather characteristics and weather-related concerns which affect the weather services provided within the service area;

(3) A comparison of the services provided within the service area and the services to be provided after such action;

(4) A description of any recent or expected modernization of NWS operation which will enhance services in the service area;

(5) An identification of any area within the affected service area which would not receive coverage (at an elevation of 10,000 feet) by the next generation weather radar network;

(6) Evidence, based upon operational demonstration of modernized NWS operations, which was considered in reaching the conclusion that no degradation in service will result from such action including the ASOS Commissioning Report; services of three letters between NWS and FAA confirming that weather services will continue in full compliance with applicable flight aviation rules after ASOS commissioning; Surface Aviation Observation Transition Checklist, where required, documenting transfer of augmentation and backup responsibility from NWS to FAA; successful resolution of ASOS users confirmation of services complaints; and an in-place supplementary data program at the responsible WFO(s);

(7) Warning and forecast verification statistics for pre-modernized and modernized services which were utilized in determining that services have not been degraded;

(8) An Air Safety Appraisal for offices which are located on an airport; and

(9) A letter appointing the liaison officer.

These proposed certifications do not include any report of the Committee which could be submitted in accordance with sections 706(b)(6) and 707(c) of Pub. L. 102-567. In December 1995 the Committee decided that, in general, they would forego the optional consultation on proposed certifications. Instead, the Committee would just review certifications after the public comment period had closed so their consultation would be with the benefit of public comments that had been submitted.

This notice does not include the complete certification packages because they are too voluminous to publish. Copies of the certification packages and supporting documentation can be obtained through the contact listed above.

Once all public comments have been received and considered, the NWS will complete consultation with the Committee and determine whether to proceed with the final certification. At the June 25, 1997 and the September 24, 1997 MTC meetings the Committee stated that its endorsement of certifications is "subject to the following qualification:

(1) The number of trained staff in each modernized field office meets staffing requirements as established by the modernization criteria and documented in the National Implementation Plan and the Human Resources Plan (WBS 1100). Delays in training or failure to fill required positions will increase the risk of degradation of service;

(2) The availability of operational systems in each modernized field office meets requirements as established by the modernization criteria and documented in the System Commissioning and Support Function Demonstration Plans; and

(3) The operational and administrative infrastructures and technical development needed to support the modernized field offices be maintained as required by the modernization plan." It is expected that these qualifications can be met for the above proposed certifications. If these qualifications can not be met prior to the December MTC meeting, these proposed certifications may or may not be presented to the Committee. If a decision to certify is made, the Secretary of Commerce must publish the final certification in the FR and transmit the certification to the appropriate Congressional committees prior to automating and closing these offices.

Dated: September 26, 1997.

Robert S. Winokur,
Acting Assistant Administrator for Weather Services.

[FR Doc. 97-26128 Filed 10-1-97; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

National Weather Service Modernization and Associated Restructuring

AGENCY: National Weather Service (NWS), NOAA, Commerce.

ACTION: Notice and opportunity for public comment.

SUMMARY: The NWS is publishing a proposed certification for the automation of the Williston, ND, Weather Service Office which will be automated at FAA Weather Observation Service Level D and with services being provided by the future Bismarck Weather Forecast Office (WFO).

In accordance with Pub. L. 102-567, the public will have 60 days in which to comment on this proposed automation certification.

DATES: Comments are requested by December 1, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Requests for copies of the proposed automation package should be sent to Tom Beaver, Room 11426, 1325 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910, telephone 301-713-0300. All comments should be sent to Tom Beaver at the above address.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Tom Beaver at 301-713-0300.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In accordance with section 706 of Pub. L. 102-567, the Secretary of Commerce must certify that this automation will not result in any degradation of service to the affected area of responsibility and must publish the proposed automation certification in the **Federal Register**. The documentation supporting the proposed certification includes the following:

- (1) a draft memorandum by the meteorologist-in-charge recommending the certification, the final of which will be endorsed by the Regional Director and the Assistant Administrator of the NWS if appropriate, after consideration of public comments and completion of consultation with the Modernization Transition Committee (the Committee);
- (2) a description of local weather characteristics and weather-related concerns which affect the weather services provided within the service area;
- (3) a comparison of services provided in the service area and the services to be provided after such action;
- (4) a description of any recent or expected modernization of NWS operation which will enhance services in the service area;
- (5) an identification of any area within the affected service area which would not receive coverage (at an elevation of 10,000 feet) by the next generation weather radar network;
- (6) evidence, based upon operational demonstration of modernized NWS operations, which was considered in reaching the conclusion that no degradation in service will result from such action including the ASOS Commissioning Report; series of three letters between NWS and FAA confirming that weather services will continue in full compliance with applicable flight aviation rules after ASOS commissioning; successful resolution of ASOS user confirmation of services complaints; and an in-place supplementary data program at the responsible WFO; and
- (7) a letter appointing the liaison officer.

This proposed certification does not include any report of the Committee

which could be submitted in accordance with sections 706(b)(6) and 707(c) of Public Law 102-567. In December 1995 the Committee decided that, in general, they would forego the optional consultation on proposed certifications. Instead, the Committee would just review certifications after the public comment period had closed so their consultation would be with the benefit of public comments that had been submitted.

This notice does not include the complete certification package because it is too voluminous to publish. Copies of the certification package and supporting documentation can be obtained through the contact listed above.

Once all public comments have been received and considered, the NWS will complete consultation with the Committee and determine whether to proceed with the final certification. At the June 25, and September 24, 1997 MTC meetings the Committee stated that its endorsement of certifications is "subject to the following qualifications:

- (1) The number of trained staff in each modernized field office meets staffing requirements as established by the modernization criteria and documented in the National Implementation Plan and the Human Resources Plan (WBS 1100). Delays in training or failure to fill required positions will increase the risk of degradation of service;
- (2) The availability of operational systems in each modernized field office meets requirements as established by the modernization criteria and documented in the System Commissioning and Support Function Demonstration Plans; and
- (3) The operational and administrative infrastructures and technical development needed to support the modernized field offices be maintained as required by the modernization plan." It is expected that these qualifications can be met for this proposed certification. If the qualifications can not be met prior to the December MTC meeting, this proposed certification may or may not be presented to the Committee.

If a decision to certify is made, the Secretary of Commerce must publish the final certification in the FR and transmit the certification to the appropriate Congressional committees prior to automating this office.

Dated: September 26, 1997.

Robert S. Winokur,
Acting Assistant Administrator for Weather Services.

[FR Doc. 97-26129 Filed 10-1-97; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 092497A]

Marine Mammals

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

ACTION: Denial of public display permit (PHF870-1391)

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the National Marine Fisheries Service has denied issuance of a permit to M & M Amusement Park to import marine mammals for public display purposes.

ADDRESSES: Documents submitted in connection with the above application are available for review upon written request or by appointment in the following office(s):

Permits and Documentation Division, F/PR1, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 13130, Silver Spring, MD 20910 (301/713-2289); and

Regional Administrator, Southeast Region, NMFS, NOAA, 9731 Executive Center Drive North, St. Petersburg, FL 33702 (813/570-5301).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ann Hochman, 301/713-2289.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On Friday, July 25, 1997, notice was published in the **Federal Register** (62 FR 40050) that an application had been filed by M & M Amusement Park, Calle Gilberto Rolin L16, Caguas, PR 00725. A public display permit was requested to import two bottlenose dolphins (*Delphinapterus leucas*) and three South American sea lions (*Otaria flavescens*) from Venezuela where they are currently on tour with Waterland - Mundo Marino of Valle, Colombia, into Puerto Rico for public display at several sites including San Juan, Ponce and Mayaguez. The requested permit has been denied subject to the provisions of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*), the Regulations Governing the Taking and Importing of Marine Mammals (50 CFR part 216), and the conditions set forth therein. Most importantly, the applicant was not registered under nor held a license issued under 7 U.S.C. 2131, *et seq.*

Dated: September 26, 1997

Ann D. Terbush,
Chief, Permits and Documentation, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 97-26059 Filed 10-1-97; 8:45 am]

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