

**ACTION:** Notice of issuance of a letter of authorization.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA), as amended, and implementing regulations, notification is hereby given that a 1-year letter of authorization to take small numbers of seals and sea lions was issued on April 2, 1999, to the 30<sup>th</sup> Space Wing, U.S. Air Force.

**ADDRESSES:** The letter of authorization and supporting documentation are available for review during regular business hours in the following offices: Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910, and the Southwest Region, NMFS, 501 West Ocean Boulevard, Suite 4200, Long Beach, CA 90802.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Kenneth R. Hollingshead, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, (301) 713-2055, or Christina Fahy, NMFS, (562) 980-4023.

**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 NMFS 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 seals and sea lions incidental to missile and rocket launches, aircraft flight test operations, and helicopter operations at Vandenberg Air Force Base, CA were published on March 1, 1999 (64 FR 9925), and remain in effect until December 31, 2003.

Issuance of this letter of authorization is based on a finding that the total

takings will have no more than a negligible impact on the seal and sea lion populations off the Vandenberg coast and on the Northern Channel Islands.

Dated: April 2, 1999.

**Art Jeffers,**

*Deputy Director, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.*  
[FR Doc. 99-8767 Filed 4-7-99; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3510-22-F**

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 033099D]

#### Marine Mammals; File No. 945-1499-00

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

**ACTION:** Receipt of application.

**SUMMARY:** Notice is hereby given that Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve, has applied in due form for a permit to take humpback whales (*Megaptera novaeangliae*), minke whales (*Balaenoptera acutorostrata*, and killer whales (*Orcinus orca*) for purposes of scientific research.

**DATES:** Written or telefaxed comments must be received on or before May 10, 1999.

**ADDRESSES:** The application and related documents are available for review upon written request or by appointment in the following office(s):

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

Regional Administrator, Alaska Region, 709 W. 9<sup>th</sup> Street, Federal Building, Room 461, P.O. Box 21668, Juneau, Alaska 99802 (907/586-7012).

Written comments or requests for a public hearing on this application should be mailed to the Chief, Permits and Documentation Division, F/PR1, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 13705, Silver Spring, MD 20910. Those individuals requesting a hearing should set forth the specific reasons why a hearing on this particular request would be appropriate.

Comments may also be submitted by facsimile at (301) 713-0376, provided the facsimile is confirmed by hard copy submitted by mail and postmarked no later than the closing date of the comment period. Please note that comments will not be accepted by e-mail or by other electronic media.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Jeannie Drevenak, 301/713-2289.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The subject permit is requested under the authority of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended (MMPA; 16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*), the Regulations Governing the Taking and Importing of Marine Mammals (50 CFR part 216), the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*), and the regulations governing the taking, importing, and exporting of endangered fish and wildlife (50 CFR 222.23).

The applicant is requesting authorization to inadvertently harass up to 200 humpback whales (*Megaptera novaeangliae*) 20 minke whales (*Balaenoptera acutorostrata*) and 75 killer whales (*Orcinus orca*) annually for scientific research purposes during observational, photo-identification, prey assessment and acoustic monitoring activities, and collection of sloughed skin samples for export to New Zealand. Research will be conducted in the waters of Glacier Bay and Icy Strait, Alaska over a five year period. The applicant proposes to initiate this work on May 1, 1999.

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), an initial determination has been made that the activity proposed is categorically excluded from the requirement to prepare an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement.

Concurrent with the publication of this notice in the **Federal Register**, NMFS is forwarding copies of this application to the Marine Mammal Commission and its Committee of Scientific Advisors.

Dated: March 30, 1999.

**Ann Hochman,**

*Acting Chief, Permits and Documentation Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.*

[FR Doc. 99-8615 Filed 4-7-99; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3510-22-F**

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 032599C]

#### Marine Mammals; File No. 881-1443 and File No. 633-1483

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