

work of the Committee, and ability to work with governmental and officials and industry representatives to reach consensus on complex environmental and trade issues affecting the relevant industry sector.

(3) Preference will be accorded nominees who also demonstrate knowledge of and familiarity with the relevant industry sector, as well as with international trade matters, including trade policy development, relevant to that sector.

The environmental representative, as a member of the Committee, will be required to have a security clearance. Members serve without compensation and are responsible for all expenses incurred in attending Committee meetings.

#### Application Procedures

Requests for applications should be sent to the Director of the Industry Consultations Program, U.S. Department of Commerce, 14th and Constitution Avenue, NW, Room 2015-B, Washington, D.C. 20230.

This notice is issued under the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C., app. 2) and 21 CFR part 14 relating to advisory committees.

**Michael J. Copps,**

*Assistant Secretary for Trade Development.*  
[FR Doc. 00-24890 Filed 9-27-00; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 090600A]

#### Taking and Importing Marine Mammals; Taking Marine Mammals Incidental to Construction and Operation of Offshore Oil and Gas Facilities in the Beaufort Sea

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

**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 letter of authorization (LOA) to take a small number of marine mammals incidental to construction and operation of offshore oil and gas facilities at the Northstar development in the Beaufort Sea off Alaska has been issued to BP

Exploration (Alaska), Anchorage, AK (BPXA).

**DATES:** This LOA is effective from September 18, 2000, through November 30, 2001.

**ADDRESSES:** A copy of the application and LOA 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 (301) 713-2055, ext. 128, or Brad Smith (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 by NMFS and regulations are issued. Under the MMPA, the term  $\geq$ taking $\geq$  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, will not have an unmitigable adverse impact on the availability of the species or stock(s) of marine mammals for subsistence uses, and if regulations are prescribed setting forth the permissible methods of taking and the requirements pertaining to the monitoring and reporting of such taking. Regulations governing the taking of marine mammals incidental to construction and operation of the offshore oil and gas facility at Northstar in the Beaufort Sea were published and made effective on May 25, 2000 (65 FR 34014), and remain in effect until May 25, 2005.

#### Summary of Request

On November 30, 1998 (64 FR 9965, March 1, 1999), NMFS received a request from BPXA for an incidental, small take exemption under section 101(a)(5)(A) of the MMPA to take marine mammals incidental to construction and operation of an offshore oil and gas facility at Northstar in state and Federal waters. Because of delays in construction during 1999, and in issuing a proposed rule on this matter, on October 1, 1999, BPXA updated its application to NMFS. On October 22, 1999 (64 FR 57010), NMFS published a notice of proposed

rulemaking on BPXA's application and invited interested persons to submit comments, information, and suggestions concerning the application and proposed rule. These comments were addressed during the promulgation of final rulemaking on this action, which was published on May 25, 2000 (65 FR 34014). A complete description of the activity, the level of taking of marine mammals, and other concerns can be found in this document.

Issuance of this LOA is based on findings, described in the preamble to the final rule, that the total takings by this activity will result in only small numbers of marine mammals being taken, have no more than a negligible impact on marine mammal stocks in the Beaufort Sea, and not have an unmitigable adverse impact on the availability of the affected marine mammal stocks for subsistence uses. In addition, NMFS finds that BPXA has met the requirements contained in the implementing regulations, including monitoring and reporting requirements.

Dated: September 18, 2000.

**Donald R. Knowles,**

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

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## DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

### Notice of Proposed Information Collection Requests

**AGENCY:** Department of Education.

**SUMMARY:** The Leader, Regulatory Information Management Group, Office of the Chief Information Officer, invites comments on the proposed information collection requests as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

**DATES:** Interested persons are invited to submit comments on or before November 27, 2000.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Section 3506 of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35) requires that the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) provide interested Federal agencies and the public an early opportunity to comment on information collection requests. OMB may amend or waive the requirement for public consultation to the extent that public participation in the approval process would defeat the purpose of the information collection, violate State or Federal law, or substantially interfere with any agency's ability to perform its statutory obligations. The Leader, Regulatory Information Management Group, Office of the Chief Information

Officer, publishes that notice containing proposed information collection requests prior to submission of these requests to OMB. Each proposed information collection, grouped by office, contains the following: (1) Type of review requested, *e.g.* new, revision, extension, existing or reinstatement; (2) Title; (3) Summary of the collection; (4) Description of the need for, and proposed use of, the information; (5) Respondents and frequency of collection; and (6) Reporting and/or Recordkeeping burden. OMB invites public comment. The Department of Education is especially interested in public comment addressing the following issues: (1) Is this collection necessary to the proper functions of the Department; (2) will this information be processed and used in a timely manner; (3) is the estimate of burden accurate; (4) how might the Department enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (5) how might the Department minimize the burden of this collection on the respondents, including through the use of information technology.

Dated: September 22, 2000.

**John Tressler,**

*Leader, Regulatory Information Management, Office of the Chief Information Officer.*

#### **Office of Educational Research and Improvement**

*Type of Review:* New.

*Title:* Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) Progress in International Reading Literacy Study.

*Frequency:* One time.

*Affected Public:* Businesses or other for-profit; State, Local, or Tribal Gov't, SEAs or LEAs.

*Reporting and Recordkeeping Hour Burden:*

Responses: 12,700.

Burden Hours: 11,350.

*Abstract:* Information collected is used to assess the reading literacy skills, habits, and attitudes of approximately 6,000 4th-graders in 200 schools. The purposes of collecting the data in the full-scale study are twofold; first, the data will allow a comparative analysis of American students' reading literacy with that of their counterparts in 36 other nations; second, the data will give researchers an understanding of the status of reading instruction in the United States today.

Requests for copies of the proposed information collection request may be accessed from <http://edicsweb.ed.gov>, or should be addressed to Vivian Reese, Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Room 4050, Regional Office Building 3, Washington, D.C.

20202-4651. Requests may also be electronically mailed to the internet address OCIO\_IMG\_Issues@ed.gov or faxed to 202-708-9346. Please specify the complete title of the information collection when making your request. Comments regarding burden and/or the collection activity requirements should be directed to Kathy Axt at Kathy\_Axt@ed.gov. Individuals who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339.

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**BILLING CODE 4000-01-P**

#### **DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

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necessary to the proper functions of the Department; (2) will this information be processed and used in a timely manner; (3) is the estimate of burden accurate; (4) how might the Department enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (5) how might the Department minimize the burden of this collection on the respondents, including through the use of information technology.

Dated: September 22, 2000.

**John Tressler,**

*Leader, Regulatory Information Management, Office of the Chief Information Officer.*

#### **Office of Intergovernmental and Interagency Affairs**

*Type of Review:* Reinstatement.

*Title:* Applications for the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program.

*Frequency:* Annually.

*Affected Public:* Businesses or other for-profit.

*Reporting and Recordkeeping Hour Burden:*

Responses: 2,600.

Burden Hours: 41,600.

*Abstract:* The United States Presidential Scholars Program is a national recognition program to honor and recognize outstanding graduating high school seniors. Candidates are invited to apply to the program based on academic achievements on the SAT and ACT. This program was established under Executive Order of the President 11155.

Requests for copies of the proposed information collection request may be accessed from <http://edicsweb.ed.gov>, or should be addressed to Vivian Reese, Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Room 4050, Regional Office Building 3, Washington, D.C. 20202-4651. Requests may also be electronically mailed to the internet address OCIO\_IMG\_Issues@ed.gov or faxed to 202-708-9346.

Please specify the complete title of the information collection when making your request.

Comments regarding burden and/or the collection activity requirements should be directed to Jacqueline Montague at (202) 708-5359 or via her internet address Jackie\_Montague@ed.gov. Individuals who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339.

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