

Dated: May 28, 2003.

John Oliver,

*Deputy Assistant Administrator for
Operations, National Marine Fisheries
Service.*

[FR Doc. 03-13913 Filed 5-29-03; 4:39 pm]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 052803D]

Taking and Importing Marine Mammals; Taking Marine Mammals Incidental to Rocket Launches

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 an authorization for June 1, 2003 through December 31, 2003 to take small numbers of seals and sea lions has been issued to the 30th 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: Kimberly Skrupky, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, (301) 713-2322, or Christina Fahy, NMFS, (562) 980-4023.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

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: May 28, 2003.

Laurie K. Allen,

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

[FR Doc. 03-13919 Filed 6-3-03; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 053003A]

Caribbean Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice of public meetings.

SUMMARY: The Caribbean Fishery Management Council (Council) and its Administrative Committee will hold meetings.

DATES: The meetings will be held on June 18-20, 2003. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** for specific dates and times.

ADDRESSES: The meetings will be held at the Buccaneer Hotel, #7 Estate Shoys, Christiansted, St. Croix, USVI.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Caribbean Fishery Management Council, 268 Munoz Rivera Avenue, Suite 1108,

San Juan, Puerto Rico 00918-1920, telephone: (787) 766-5926.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Council will convene on Wednesday, June 18th, 2003, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., and the Administrative Committee will meet from 4:15 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. The Council will reconvene on Thursday, June 19, 2003, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., approximately, and Friday, June 20, 2003, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The Council will hold its 112th regular public meeting to discuss the items contained in the following agenda:

June 28, 2003

9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Call to Order
Adoption of Agenda
Consideration of 111th Council Meeting Verbatim Minutes
Executive Director's Report
Queen Conch Geographic Information System (GIS) - Dr. M. Barreto
Culebra's Marine Reserve Survey - Dr. Edwin Hernandez
Updates
-Marine Conservation District (MCD) Mapping Project - Jose Rivera
-MCD Photographic Survey - Graciela Garcia-Moliner
-Hydro-acoustic Survey - Jose Rivera and Aida Rosario
-West Coast of Puerto Rico Side Scan Sonar Projects - Aida Rosario
Essential Fish Habitat- Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EFH-DEIS) - Bob Trumble

4:15 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Administrative Committee Meeting
-Advisory Panel (AP)/Scientific and Statistical Committee/Habitat AP Membership
-Budget: 2002, 2003, 2004-5
-Queen Conch Initiative—Projects for Education and Scientific Literature
-Personnel Issues and Statement of Organization Practices and Procedures
-Other Business

June 19, 2003

9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

EFH/DEIS Continuation of Discussion
-Schedule for the submission of EFH/DEIS

June 20, 2003

9 a.m. - 12 noon

NOAA Fisheries 2003 Constituents Session - Dr. W. Hogarth

1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Enforcement
-Federal Government
-Puerto Rico
-U.S. Virgin Islands