

restricting the hours of detonation from 2 hours after sunrise to 1 hr before sunset to ensure adequate observation of marine mammals and sea turtles in the safety zone; (3) staggering the detonation for each explosive hole in order to spread the explosive's total overpressure over time, which in turn will reduce the radius of the caution zone; (4) capping the hole containing explosives with rock in order to reduce the outward potential of the blast, thereby reducing the chance of injuring a dolphin, manatee, or sea turtle; (5) matching, to the extent possible, the energy needed in the "work effort" of the borehole to the rock mass to minimize excess energy vented into the water column; and (6) conducting a marine mammal/sea turtle watch with no less than two qualified observers from a small water craft and/or an elevated platform on the explosives barge, at least 30 minutes before and continue for 30 minutes after each detonation to ensure that there are no dolphins or sea turtles in the area at the time of detonation.

The observer monitoring program will take place in a circular area at least three times the radius of the above described Caution Zone (called the watch zone). Any marine mammal(s) in the caution, safety, or watch zones will not be forced to move out of those zones by human intervention. Detonation shall not occur until the animal(s) move(s) out of the safety zone on its own volition.

Reporting

NMFS proposes to require the Corps to submit a report of activities 120 days before the expiration of the proposed IHA if the proposed work has started. This report will include the status of the work being undertaken, marine mammals sighted during the monitoring period, any behavioral observations made on bottlenose dolphins and any delays in detonation due to marine mammals or sea turtles being within the safety zone.

In the unlikely event a marine mammal or marine turtle is injured or killed during blasting, the Contractor shall immediately notify the NMFS Regional Office.

Endangered Species Act

Under section 7 of the ESA, the Corps completed consultation with NOAA Fisheries on September 23, 2002 and with the USFWS on June 19, 2002 for this project. Both agencies concurred with the Corps that activities associated with the Corps' dredging project in the Dodge-Lummus Island Turning Basin

were not likely to adversely affect listed species.

National Environmental Policy Act

The Corps prepared an Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) in 1989 for the Navigation Study for the Miami Harbor Channel. A copy of this document is available upon request (see ADDRESSES). NMFS is reviewing this FEIS in relation to the Corps' application and will determine the appropriate action to take under NEPA prior to making a determination on the issuance of an IHA.

Preliminary Conclusions

NMFS has preliminarily determined that the Corps' proposed action, including mitigation measures to protect marine mammals, should result, at worst, in the temporary modification in behavior by bottlenose dolphins, including temporarily vacating the area to avoid the blasting activity and the potential for minor visual and acoustic disturbance from dredging and detonations. This action is expected to have a negligible impact on the affected species or stocks of marine mammals. In addition, no take by injury and/or death is anticipated, and harassment takes will be at the lowest level practicable due to incorporation of the mitigation measures described in this document.

Proposed Authorization

NMFS proposes to reissue an IHA to the Corps for the potential harassment of small numbers of bottlenose dolphins incidental to deepening the Dodge-Lummus Island Turning Basin in Miami, FL (Turning Basin), provided the previously mentioned mitigation, monitoring, and reporting requirements are incorporated. NMFS has preliminarily determined that the proposed activity would result in the harassment of only small numbers of bottlenose dolphins and will have no more than a negligible impact on this marine mammal stock.

Information Solicited

NMFS requests interested persons to submit comments and information concerning this proposed IHA and the application for regulations request (see ADDRESSES).

Dated: January 14, 2004.

Donna Wieting,

Deputy Director, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.
[FR Doc. 04-1216 Filed 1-20-04; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-S

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 010804A]

Marine Mammals; Permit No. 821-1588-03 and File No. 909-1726-00

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

ACTION: Receipt of application for amendment and application for permit.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that Texas A&M University, Department of Marine Biology, P.O. Box 1675, Galveston, Texas 77551 (Principal Investigator: Dr. Randall W. Davis) has requested an amendment to scientific research Permit No. 821-1588-01, and Daniel T. Engelhaupt, P.O. Box 197, Picton, New Zealand has applied in due form for a permit to take marine mammals for scientific research.

DATES: Written or telefaxed comments must be received on or before February 20, 2004.

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

Permits, Conservation and Education Division, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 13705, Silver Spring, MD 20910; phone (301)713-2289; fax (301)713-0376; and

Permit No. 881-1588-03 (Davis) and File No. 909-1726-00 (Engelhaupt): Assistant Regional Administrator for Protected Resources, Southeast Region, NMFS, 9721 Executive Center Drive North, St. Petersburg, FL 33702-2432; phone (813)570-5301; fax (813)570-5517; and

File No. 909-1726-00 (Engelhaupt): Assistant Regional Administrator for Protected Resources, Northeast Region, NMFS, One Blackburn Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930-2298; phone (508)281-9346; fax (508)281-9371.

Written comments or requests for a public hearing on these requests should be submitted to the Chief, Permits, Conservation and Education 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 the 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.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Ruth Johnson (Ruth.Johnson@noaa.gov) or Carrie Hubard (Carrie.w.Hubard@noaa.gov) or Phone: (301)713-2289.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The amendment and application are requested under the authority of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended (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 (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*), and the regulations governing the taking, importing, and exporting of endangered and threatened species (50 CFR 222-226).

Permit No. 821-1588-02 (R. Davis) authorizes the permit holder to conduct research under four projects: 1) capture, tag, sample, release Weddell seals (*Leptonychotes weddelli*) on McMurdo Sound, Antarctica; 2) approach, tag, biopsy, photograph sperm whales (*Physeter macrocephalus*) in the Gulf of Mexico, and conduct research activities on Odontocetes that may result in Level B harassment; 3) import/export marine mammal specimens obtained from dead animals; and 4) Project IV - Hunting Behavior and Energetics of Free-Ranging Elephant Seals. The permit holder now requests authorization to amend Project II to increase the number of sperm whales to be taken by harassment during photo-identification and behavioral observations to 530 animals. Currently 100 sperm whales may be incidentally harassed during tagging and biopsy sampling of 60 animals.

Danied Engelhauff (File No. 909-1726) requests a permit to biopsy sample and collect naturally sloughed skin from sperm whales (*Physeter macrocephalus*) and a variety of other non-listed cetacean species in the Gulf of Mexico, North Atlantic Ocean, Caribbean Sea, and Mediterranean Sea. The goal is the continuation of a previous four-year study that analyzes population genetic structure between the Gulf of Mexico, Caribbean Sea, North Atlantic Ocean, and Mediterranean Sea and provides a comparison of these putative geographic populations with those of other geographic areas. The project is part of a multi-year and multi-institution, cross-disciplinary research program to understand the impacts of oil/gas industries and seismic exploration on the endangered sperm whale population in the Gulf of Mexico. Samples would be collected by obtaining skin samples via biopsy dart, sloughed skin sampling,

as well using extant samples of stored material obtained from NMFS Southeast and Northeast regional stranding networks. Samples will be exported to the research facilities at the University of Durham's Biological Sciences Laboratory, New Zealand, or to a similar research facility in the United States for genetic sample processing.

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: January 13, 2004.

Stephen L. Leathery,

Chief, Permits, Conservation and Education Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 04-1215 Filed 1-20-04; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-S

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Notice of Availability of Progress Report: The Coral Reef Conservation Grants Program

AGENCY: Department of Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of availability.

SUMMARY: The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) announces the availability of *Progress Report: The Coral Reef Conservation Grant Program* (Report). The Report was published in response to the Coral Reef Conservation Act of 2000 (Act, 16 U.S.C. 6401 *et seq.*, Pub. L. 106-562), which directs NOAA's Administrator to provide a report that documents the effectiveness of its grants program (Program) no later than three years after enactment of the Act.

The Report provides an overview of the Program since its establishment in 2002. It also highlights the achievements of the Program in each of six substantive topic areas, as well as provides specific information on each of the 83 grants awarded in fiscal years 2002 and 2003.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: To request a copy of the Report please contact the NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program by e-mail at coralreef@noaa.gov, by fax at (301) 713-4389, or by mail at 1305 East West Highway, NOS/ORR 10201, Silver Spring, MD 20910. The Report is also available electronically on the NOAA Coral Reef Information System Web site (<http://www.coris.noaa.gov>).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Coral Reef Conservation Act of 2000 (Act, 16 U.S.C. 6401 *et seq.*, Pub. L. 106-562) authorizes the DOC, through the NOAA Administrator and subject to the availability of funds, to make matching grants of Federal financial assistance to support projects for the conservation of coral reefs. The Act also directs NOAA's Administrator to provide a report that documents the effectiveness of its grant program (Program) no later than three years after enactment of the Act. *Progress Report: The Coral Reef Conservation Grant Program* is NOAA's response to this requirement.

This report provides an overview of the Program since its establishment in 2002, including a description of the process and results of the Program's development. It also highlights the achievements of the Program in each of the six topic areas, and provides specific information on each of the 83 grants awarded in fiscal years 2002 and 2003. This includes a State-by-State listing of Federal and non-Federal matching funds, and a detailed description of each activity, its outcomes, and measurements of performance. The report also contains summary tables that organize grant information by geographic and substantive topic area. Finally, the report contains an initial assessment of the effectiveness of the Program.

Dated: January 14, 2004.

Richard W. Spinrad,

Assistant Administrator, Ocean Services and Coastal Zone Management, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

[FR Doc. 04-1166 Filed 1-20-04; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-JE-P

CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

Proposed Information Collection; Comment Request

AGENCY: Corporation for National and Community Service.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Corporation for National and Community Service (hereinafter the "Corporation"), as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, conducts a preclearance consultation program to provide the general public and Federal agencies with an opportunity to comment on proposed and/or continuing collections of information in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA95) (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)). This program helps to ensure that requested data can