

public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on proposed and/or continuing information collections, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

DATES: Written comments must be submitted on or before February 23, 2009.

ADDRESSES: Direct all written comments to Diana Hynek, Departmental Paperwork Clearance Officer, Department of Commerce, Room 7845, 14th and Constitution Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20230 (or via the Internet at dHynek@doc.gov).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information or copies of the information collection instrument(s) and instructions should be directed to Erik Zlokovitz, Phone: (301) 713–2328 or Erik.Zlokovitz@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract

Marine recreational anglers are surveyed for catch and effort data, fish biology data, and angler socioeconomic characteristics. These data are required to carry out provisions of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) (16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*), as amended, regarding conservation and management of fishery resources.

Marine recreational fishing catch and effort data are collected through a combination of telephone surveys and on-site intercept surveys with recreational anglers. The recent amendments to MSA require the development of an improved data collection program for recreational fisheries. To meet the requirements of MSA, NOAA, National Marine Fisheries Service is developing pilot studies to test alternative approaches for surveying recreational anglers. Studies will test the effectiveness of mail surveys and panel surveys for contacting anglers and collecting recreational fishing data. The goal of these studies is to develop an efficient means of collecting fishing catch and effort data while maintaining complete coverage of the angling population.

II. Method of Collection

Information will be collected through telephone and mail interviews.

III. Data

OMB Control Number: 0648–0052.

Form Number: None.

Type of Review: Regular submission.

Affected Public: Individuals or households, business or other for-profit organizations.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 893,321.

Estimated Time Per Response: 9 minutes for mail interviews, and 35 minutes for panel survey phone interviews.

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 46,459.

Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public: \$0.

IV. Request for Comments

Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden (including hours and cost) of the proposed collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for OMB approval of this information collection; they also will become a matter of public record.

Dated: December 18, 2008.

Gwellnar Banks,

Management Analyst, Office of the Chief Information Officer.

[FR Doc. E8–30457 Filed 12–22–08; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–22–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648–XM31

Marine Mammals; File Nos. 13583 and 13599

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

ACTION: Notice; issuance of permits.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that following two entities have been issued permits to collect/receive/import/export protected species parts for scientific research purposes:

National Marine Mammal Laboratory (NMML, Dr. John Bengtson, Responsible Party), 7600 Sand Point Way NE, Seattle, WA 98115 (File No. 13583) and

National Ocean Service Marine Forensic Lab (NOS Lab, Julie Carter,

Responsible Party), 219 Fort Johnson Road, Charleston, SC 29412 (File No. 13599).

ADDRESSES: The permit and related documents are available for review upon written request or by appointment in the following offices:

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)427–2521 (File Nos. 13583 and 13599);

Alaska Region, NMFS, P.O. Box 21668, Juneau, AK 99802–1668; phone (907)586–7221; fax (907)586–7249 (File No. 13583); and

Southeast Region, NMFS, 263 13th Avenue South, Saint Petersburg, Florida 33701; phone (727)824–5312; fax (727)824–5309 (File No. 13599).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jennifer Skidmore or Kate Swails, (301)713–2289.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On September 11, 2008, notice was published in the **Federal Register** (73 FR 52829) that a request for scientific research permits had been submitted by the above-named organizations. The requested permits have been issued 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 (ESA; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*), the regulations governing the taking, importing, and exporting of endangered and threatened species (50 CFR parts 222–226), and the Fur Seal Act of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1151 *et seq.*).

File No. 13583: NMML has been issued a permit continuing the activities previously authorized under Permit No. 782–1694. This permit authorizes collection of cetacean and pinniped (except for walrus) specimens from dead animals, and for import, export, and possession of specimens taken legally worldwide. These samples may be archived, transported, shared, and analyzed by researchers in order to optimize the amount of biological information gained from each animal. No takes of live animals is authorized under this permit. There will be no non-target species taken incidentally under this permit because the permit would only cover collection, importation, exportation, and possession of samples from dead animals or live animals taken legally under other permits. This permit is valid for five years.

File No. 13599: The NOS Lab has been issued a permit authorizing the receipt, importation, exportation, transfer, archive, and analysis of marine mammal and endangered species parts. This permit includes all cetaceans, pinnipeds (except for walrus), sea turtles (in the water), smalltooth sawfish (*Pristis pectinata*), shortnose sturgeon (*Acipenser brevirostrum*) and white abalone (*Haliotis sorenseni*) under NMFS jurisdiction. No live animal takes or incidental harassment of animals would be authorized under this permit. Samples will be archived at the NOS Lab and used to support law enforcement actions, research studies (primarily genetics), and outreach education. This permit is valid for five years.

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

Issuance of these permits, as required by the ESA, was based on a finding that such permits: (1) were applied for in good faith; (2) will not operate to the disadvantage of such endangered species; and (3) are consistent with the purposes and policies set forth in section 2 of the ESA.

Dated: December 16, 2008.

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

[FR Doc. E8-30369 Filed 12-22-08; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-S

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN: 0648-XM34

New England Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice of a public meeting.

SUMMARY: The New England Fishery Management Council (Council) is scheduling a public meeting of its Scallop Committee, in January, 2009, to consider actions affecting New England fisheries in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ). Recommendations from this group will be brought to the full Council

for formal consideration and action, if appropriate.

DATES: This meeting will be held on Thursday, January 22, 2009 at 9 a.m.

ADDRESSES: This meeting will be held at the Crowne Plaza, 801 Greenwich Avenue, Warwick, RI 02886; telephone: (401) 732-6000; fax: (401) 732-0261

Council address: New England Fishery Management Council, 50 Water Street, Mill 2, Newburyport, MA 01950.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Paul J. Howard, Executive Director, New England Fishery Management Council; telephone: (978) 465-0492.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The committee will review and make final recommendations to the Council on the range of alternatives that should be analyzed under Scallop Amendment 15. The primary goal of Amendment 15 is to consider alternatives to comply with new requirements of the reauthorized Magnuson-Stevens Conservation and Management Act, specifically implementing annual catch limits. In addition, this action is considering alternatives to address excess capacity in the limited access scallop fishery. Alternatives are being considered that are designed to provide more flexibility for efficient use of the resource such as permit stacking and leasing of days at sea and/or access area trips. Lastly, this action is considering a number of alternatives to adjust several aspects of the overall scallop management program such as revising the overfishing definition, specific adjustments to the general category management program, a specific alternative to address essential fish habitat (EFH) closures on Georges Bank, adjustments to the current scallop research set-aside program, and changing the scallop fishing year from March 1 to May 1.

Special Accommodations

This meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Paul J. Howard, Executive Director, at (978) 465-0492, at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: December 17, 2008.

Tracey L. Thompson,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.
[FR Doc. E8-30362 Filed 12-22-08; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-S

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XL41

Marine Mammals; File No. 10080

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

ACTION: Notice; issuance of permit amendment.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that Dr. Kathryn A. Ono, Department of Biological Sciences, University of New England, Biddeford, ME has been issued a major amendment to Permit No. 10080-02.

ADDRESSES: The permit amendment 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)427-2521; and Northeast Region, NMFS, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930; phone (978)281-9300; fax (978) 281-9333.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Tammy Adams or Kate Swails, (301)713-2289.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On October 27, 2008, notice was published in the **Federal Register** (73 FR 63697) that a request for an amendment Permit No. 10080-02, to conduct research on gray seals (*Halichoerus grypus*) in the Gulf of Maine, had been submitted by the above-named applicant. The requested permit amendment has been issued under the authority of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*), and the regulations governing the taking and importing of marine mammals (50 CFR part 216).

The amended permit includes authorization to: (1) remotely mark the pelage of adult gray seals of both sexes (200 per year) using the various dyes and paints already permitted for use on pups; (2) use an additional type of marking agent, an alcohol based-dye (Rhodamine B 500%), on pups and adults; (3) disturb an additional 400 non-target gray seals per year during the additional marking activities; and (4) disturb an additional 300 gray seals annually during field camp operations associated with conduct of the research. The amendment also authorizes the incidental research-related mortality of up to four gray seal pups annually.