

participants would be required to stop fishing when the hard cap is reached.

2. Triggered area closure – Establish a salmon savings area closure based on current salmon bycatch information. These closures would occur once a specified cap level was reached.

Additional information about non-Chinook salmon bycatch and the alternatives that the Council may consider may be found on the Council's website at: http://www.alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/npfmc/current_issues/bycatch/chumbycatch1208.pdf.

Preliminary Identification of Issues

A principal objective of the scoping and public input process is to identify potentially significant impacts to the human environment. The analysis will evaluate the impacts of the alternatives for all resources, species, and issues that may be directly or indirectly affected by non-Chinook salmon bycatch in the Bering Sea pollock fisheries. The following components of the biological and physical environment may be evaluated: (1) target and non-target fish stocks, forage fish, and prohibited species, including salmon species; (2) species listed under the ESA and their critical habitat; (3) seabirds; (4) marine mammals; and (5) the ecosystem.

Social and economic impacts also would be considered in terms of the effects that changes to non-Chinook salmon bycatch management measures would have on the following groups of individuals: (1) those who participate in harvesting pollock; (2) those who process and market pollock and pollock products; (3) those who consume pollock products; (4) those who rely on living marine resources caught in the management area, particularly non-Chinook salmon; (5) those who benefit from subsistence, commercial, and sport salmon fisheries; and (6) fishing communities.

Public Involvement

Scoping is an early and open process for determining the scope of issues to be addressed in an EA for EIS and for identifying the significant issues related to the proposed action. A principal objective of the scoping and public involvement process is to identify a range of reasonable of management alternatives that will delineate critical issues and provide a clear basis for distinguishing among those alternatives and selecting a preferred alternative. Through this notice, we are notifying the public that a NEPA analysis and decision-making process for this proposed action has been initiated so that interested or affected people may

participate and contribute to the final decision.

We are seeking written public comments on the scope of issues, including potential impacts, and alternatives that should be considered in revising non-Chinook salmon bycatch management measures. Written comments will be accepted at the address above (see **ADDRESSES**). Written comments should be as specific as possible to be the most helpful. Written comments received during the scoping process, including the names and addresses of those submitting them, will be considered part of the public record of this proposal and will be available for public inspection.

The public is invited to participate and provide input at Council meetings where the latest scientific information regarding salmon bycatch in the Bering Sea pollock fishery is reviewed and alternative non-Chinook salmon bycatch reduction measures are developed and evaluated. Notice of future Council meetings will be published in the **Federal Register** and posted on the Internet at <http://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/>. Please visit this website for more information on this proposed action and for guidance on submitting effective public comments.

Dated: January 2, 2009.

Emily H. Menashes

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.
[FR Doc. E9-125 Filed 1-7-09; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XM55

Marine Mammals; File No. 782-1708

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 the NMFS National Marine Mammal Laboratory, Seattle, WA has been issued a minor amendment to Scientific Research Permit No. 782-1708-04.

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

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.

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

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The requested amendment has been granted 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 original permit (No. 782-1708), issued on August 23, 2003 (68 FR 53967) and valid through December 31, 2008, authorized research on northern fur seals (*Callorhinus ursinus*) of the San Miguel Islands Stock at San Miguel Island, California, and of the Eastern North Pacific Stock at Bogoslof Island and the Pribilof Islands in Alaska. The permit was subsequently amended four times to modify methods and take numbers. The minor amendment (No. 782-1708-05) extends the duration of the permit through December 31, 2009, and does not change any other terms or conditions of the permit.

Dated: January 2, 2009.

P. Michael Payne,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

United States Patent and Trademark Office

[Docket No. PTO-C-2008-0058]

National Medal of Technology and Innovation Nomination Evaluation Committee

AGENCY: United States Patent and Trademark Office.

ACTION: Notice and request for nominations.

SUMMARY: The Department of Commerce (United States Patent and Trademark Office) is requesting nominations of individuals to serve on the National Medal of Technology and Innovation Nomination Evaluation Committee. The United States Patent and Trademark Office will consider nominations received in response to this notice as well as from other sources. The **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section of this notice provides committee and membership criteria.