

Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP) to protect important coastal and estuarine areas that have significant conservation, recreation, ecological, historical, or aesthetic values, or that are threatened by conversion, and to issue guidelines for this program delineating the criteria for grant awards. The guidelines establish procedures for eligible applicants who choose to participate in the program to use when developing state conservation plans, proposing or soliciting projects under this program, applying for funds, and carrying out projects under this program in a manner that is consistent with the purposes of the program. Guidelines for the CELCP can be found on NOAA's Web site at: <http://coastalmanagement.noaa.gov/land> or may be obtained upon request via the contact information listed above.

The CELCP was reauthorized under Public Law 111-111, the Omnibus Public Lands Management Act, as a component of the Coastal Zone Management Act. NOAA also has, or is given, additional authority under the Coastal Zone Management Act, annual appropriations or other authorities, to issue funds to coastal states, localities or other recipients for planning, conservation, acquisition, protection, restoration, or construction projects. The required information enables NOAA to implement the CELCP, under its current or future authorization, and facilitate the review of similar projects under different, but related, authorities.

II. Method of Collection

Electronic formats are the preferred method for submitting CELCP plans, project applications, performance reports and other required materials. However, respondents may submit materials in electronic or paper formats. Project applications are normally submitted electronically via Grants.gov, but may be submitted by mail in paper form if electronic submittal is not a viable option. Methods of submittal for plans, performance reports or other required materials may include electronic submittal via email or NOAA Grants Online, mail and facsimile transmission of paper forms, or submittal of electronic files on compact disc.

III. Data

OMB Control Number: 0648-0459.

Form Number: None.

Type of Review: Regular submission (extension of a current information collection).

Affected Public: State, Local, or Tribal Government; not-for-profit institutions.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 50.

Estimated Time per Response: CELCP Plans, 120 hours to develop or 35 hours to revise or update; project application and checklist, 15 hours; and final grant applications and semi-annual and annual reporting, 5 hours.

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 1,405.

Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public: \$273 in recordkeeping/reporting costs.

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: April 26, 2012.

Gwellnar Banks,

Management Analyst, Office of the Chief Information Officer.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XC010

Marine Mammals; File No. 14325

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

ACTION: Notice; receipt of application for permit amendment.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G), Division of Wildlife Conservation, Juneau, AK, (Principal Investigator: Michael Rehberg), has applied for an amendment to Scientific Research Permit No. 14325-01 for

taking Steller sea lions (*Eumetopias jubatus*) in Alaska.

DATES: Written, telefaxed, or email comments must be received on or before June 1, 2012.

ADDRESSES: The application and related documents are available for review by selecting "Records Open for Public Comment" from the *Features* box on the Applications and Permits for Protected Species home page, <https://apps.nmfs.noaa.gov>, and then selecting File No. 14325 from the list of available applications.

These documents are also available upon written request or by appointment in the following offices:

Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 13705, Silver Spring, MD 20910; phone (301) 427-8401; fax (301) 713-0376; and

Alaska Region, NMFS, P.O. Box 21668, Juneau, AK 99802-1668; phone (907) 586-7221; fax (907) 586-7249.

Written comments on this application should be submitted to the Chief, Permits and Conservation Division, at the address listed above. Comments may also be submitted by facsimile to (301) 713-0376, or by email to NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov. Please include the File No. in the subject line of the email comment.

Those individuals requesting a public hearing should submit a written request to the Chief, Permits, Conservation and Education Division at the address listed above. The request should set forth the specific reasons why a hearing on this application would be appropriate.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Tammy Adams or Amy Sloan, (301) 427-8401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The subject amendment to Permit No. 14325-01 is 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.*), the regulations governing the taking, importing, and exporting of endangered and threatened species (50 CFR 222-226), and the Fur Seal Act of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1151 *et seq.*).

Permit No. 14325, issued on August 17, 2009 (74 FR 44822), authorizes taking of marine mammals during continuation of a long-term research program investigating various hypotheses for the decline or lack of recovery of Steller sea lions in Alaska. The permit includes takes for: incidental disturbance during aerial

surveys; disturbance of animals on rookeries and haulouts during brand resighting surveys, and incidental to scat collection; capture for instrument attachment, branding, capture method development, physiological research, and sample collection; permanent marking of pups for long-term demographic and distribution studies; capture of older animals for physiological assessment; and attachment of scientific instruments to investigate foraging ecology, diving behavior and habitat use. The permit also authorizes unintentional mortality of Steller sea lions, and incidental harassment of harbor seals (*Phoca vitulina richardsi*), northern fur seals (*Callorhinus ursinus*), and California sea lions (*Zalophus californianus*). The permit was amended (to version no. 14325-01) on November 16, 2011, to change the identity of the Principal Investigator from Dr. Lorrie Rea to Michael Rehberg.

The permit holder is requesting the permit be amended to include changes to the terms and conditions of the permit related to numbers of animals taken and to the location and manner of taking to include: manual restraint of pups in the eastern Distinct Population Segment (eDPS) and western DPS (wDPS); capture of adult Steller sea lions using remotely delivered immobilization agents; adding jugular blood draw/catheter location for sampling and Evans Blue injection; adding the intraperitoneal cavity to allowable deuterium injection sites; modifying time of year and number of takes for the Alsek/Akwe aerial surveys; and adding aerial surveys at Cape Newenham haulout and in the northern Bering Sea.

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), an initial determination has been made that the activities proposed are consistent with the Preferred Alternative in the Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for Steller Sea Lion and Northern Fur Seal Research (NMFS 2007), and that issuance of the permit would not have a significant adverse impact on the human environment.

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: April 27, 2012.

Tammy C. Adams,

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

[FR Doc. 2012-10629 Filed 5-1-12; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XB068

Availability of Report: California Eelgrass Mitigation Policy; Extension of Comment Period

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

ACTION: Notice of availability; request for comments.

SUMMARY: NMFS is announcing an extension in the public comment period for the notice to allow other agencies and the public an opportunity to review and provide comments on the proposed adoption of the California Eelgrass Mitigation Policy (CEMP) by NMFS Southwest Region (SWR) Habitat Conservation Division (HCD). NMFS published the CEMP, which included a request for comment in the **Federal Register** on March 9, 2012. The public comment period was to end on May 8, 2012—60 days after publication in the **Federal Register**. The purpose of this document is to extend the comment period an additional 60 days until July 7, 2012. This extension of the comment period is provided to allow the public additional time to provide comment on the CEMP. The intent of the CEMP is to help ensure consistent and effective mitigation of unavoidable impacts to eelgrass habitat throughout the SWR. The CEMP is a unified policy document for SWR-HCD, based on the highly successful implementation of the Southern California Eelgrass Mitigation Policy, which has improved mitigation effectiveness since its initial adoption in 1991. This policy is needed to ensure effective, statewide eelgrass mitigation and will help ensure that unavoidable impacts to eelgrass habitat are fully and appropriately mitigated. It is anticipated that the adoption and implementation of this policy will provide for enhanced success of eelgrass mitigation in California. Given the success of the Southern California Eelgrass Mitigation Policy, the California Eelgrass Mitigation Policy reflects an expansion of the application of this policy with

minor modifications to ensure a high standard of statewide eelgrass management and protection. The CEMP will supersede the Southern California Eelgrass Mitigation Policy for all areas of California upon its adoption.

DATES: Public comments must be received on or before 5 p.m., Pacific standard time July 7, 2012. All comments received before the due date will be considered before finalizing the CEMP.

ADDRESSES: Comments on the CEMP may be submitted by mail to the National Marine Fisheries Service, 777 Sonoma Avenue, Suite 325, Santa Rosa, CA 95409, Attn: California Eelgrass Mitigation Policy Comments. Comments may also be sent via facsimile to (707) 578-3435. Comments may also be submitted electronically via email to SWR.CEMP@noaa.gov. All comments received will become part of the public record and will be available for review upon request.

The reports are available at <http://swr.nmfs.noaa.gov/hcd/> or by calling the contact person listed below or by sending a request to Korie.Schaeffer@noaa.gov. Please include appropriate contact information when requesting the documents.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Korie Schaeffer, at 707-575-6087.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Eelgrass species are seagrasses that occur in the temperate unconsolidated substrate of shallow coastal environments, enclosed bays, and estuaries. Seagrass habitat has been lost from temperate estuaries worldwide (Duarte 2002, Lotze *et al.* 2006, Orth *et al.* 2006). While both natural and human-induced mechanisms have contributed to these losses, impacts from human population expansion and associated pollution and upland development is the primary cause (Short and Wyllie-Echeverria 1996). Throughout California, human activities including, but not limited to, urban development, recreational boating, and commercial shipping continue to degrade, disturb, and/or destroy important eelgrass habitat. For example, dredging and filling; shading and alteration of circulation patterns; and watershed inputs of sediment, nutrients, and unnaturally concentrated or directed freshwater flows can directly and indirectly destroy eelgrass habitats. The importance of eelgrass both ecologically and economically, coupled with ongoing human pressure and potentially increasing degradation and loss from climate change, highlights the need to protect, maintain, and where feasible, enhance eelgrass habitat.