

Mansfield, MA 02048; telephone: (508) 339-2200.

The written comment period has been extended and should be sent to Paul Howard, Executive Director, 50 Water Street, Mill 2, Newburyport, MA 01950. Comments may also be sent via fax to (978) 465-3116 or submitted via email to comment@nefmc.org with "Comment on Small Mesh Multispecies Amendment 19" in the subject line. Requests for copies of the public hearing document and other information should be directed to Paul J. Howard, Executive Director, New England Fishery Management Council, 50 Water Street, Mill 2, Newburyport, MA 01950; telephone: (978) 465-0492. The public hearing document is also accessible electronically via the Internet at <http://www.nefmc.org/mesh/index.html>.

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

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Council staff will provide information on the status of Amendment 19 to the Northeast Multispecies FMP. The draft alternatives include annual limits on catch and landings by fishery program and/or stock, in-season and post-season accountability measures including incidental possession limits, year round red hake possession limits, monitoring and specification setting procedures, and a proposed increase in the 30,000 lbs. silver hake possession limit in the Southern New England and Mid-Atlantic Exemption Areas. Final alternatives were approved at the April 24-26, 2012 Council meeting, but the Council will take supplemental action at the June 19-21, 2012 Council meeting on proposed increase in the 30,000 lbs. silver hake (whiting) possession limit. There will be time available for questions and answers.

Written comment period has been extended on the draft amendment and must be received by 5 p.m. EDT, Thursday, May 24, 2012 and may be mailed to the Council office at the address above, faxed to (978) 465-3116 or emailed to: comment@nefmc.org (attention/subject line: Comment on Small Mesh Multispecies Amendment 19).

Special Accommodations

The hearing is physically accessible to people with physical disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Paul J. Howard (see **ADDRESSES**) at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

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

Dated: May 7, 2012.

Tracey L. Thompson,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XA774

Marine Mammals; File No. 13927

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 Dr. James H.W. Hain, Associated Scientists at Woods Hole, Box 721, Woods Hole, MA 02543, has applied for an amendment to Scientific Research Permit No. 13927.

DATES: Written, telefaxed, or email comments must be received on or before June 11, 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. 13927 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 Southeast Region, NMFS, 263 13th Avenue South, Saint Petersburg, FL 33701; phone (727) 824-5312; fax (727) 824-5309.

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: Carrie Hubbard or Amy Hapeman, (301) 427-8401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The subject amendment to Permit No. 13927 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.*), and the regulations governing the taking, importing, and exporting of endangered and threatened species (50 CFR parts 222-226).

Permit No. 13927, issued on October 19, 2011 (76 FR 67151), authorizes the permit holder to take North Atlantic right (*Eubalaena glacialis*) and humpback whales (*Megaptera novaeangliae*) during aerial and vessel surveys off the U.S. southeast coast. Bottlenose (*Tursiops truncatus*) and Atlantic spotted dolphins (*Stenella frontalis*) may be incidentally harassed during research activities. The field season is December through April. The permit is valid through October 31, 2016. The permit holder is requesting the permit be amended to increase take numbers of North Atlantic right whales from 50 to 100 per year during aerial surveys and from ten to 60 per year during vessel surveys. The permit holder is not increasing his research effort or asking for changes to methodologies, location, species, field season, or permit duration. The permit holder is requesting the increase because the take numbers he originally requested and is currently authorized do not allow him to conduct his research as planned. Without the increases, a few groups of whales could exhaust his take numbers. As a result, he would have to end his field seasons prematurely and would lose the opportunity to collect data on whales only observed at the end of the season.

A draft supplemental environmental assessment (SEA) has been prepared in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), to examine whether significant environmental impacts could result from issuance of the proposed scientific research permit. The draft SEA is available for review and comment simultaneous with the scientific research permit application.

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: May 7, 2012.

Tammy C. Adams,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Telecommunications and Information Administration

Recruitment of First Responder Network Authority Board of Directors

AGENCY: National Telecommunications and Information Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012 ("the Act"), Public Law 112-96, 126 Stat. 156 (2012), the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) announces the recruitment of the Board of Directors of the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet). The Act created FirstNet as an independent authority within NTIA that will establish a single nationwide, interoperable public safety broadband network. The Board of Directors will be responsible for making strategic decisions regarding FirstNet's operations. Expressions of interest for membership on the FirstNet Board of Directors will be accepted until May 25, 2012.

DATES: Expressions of interest must be postmarked or electronically transmitted on or before May 25, 2012.

ADDRESSES: Persons wishing to submit expressions of interest as described below should send that information to: Jim Wasilewski, Deputy Chief of Staff, by email to FirstNetBoard@ntia.doc.gov; by U.S. mail or commercial delivery service to: Office of the Assistant Secretary, National Telecommunications and Information Administration, 1401 Constitution Avenue NW., Room 4898, Washington, DC 20230; or by facsimile transmission to (202) 501-0536.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jim Wasilewski, National Telecommunications and Information Administration, 1401 Constitution Avenue NW., Room 4898, Washington, DC 20230, (202) 482-1840, jwasilewski@ntia.doc.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background and Authority

Title VI of the Act provides 20 megahertz of spectrum and \$7 billion to

establish a single nationwide, interoperable public safety broadband network. It also establishes FirstNet as an independent authority within NTIA to build, deploy, and operate the network and to hold the single public safety license granted for wireless public safety broadband deployment.¹ The Act also sets forth the structure of FirstNet's Board of Directors.² Under the Act, the Board will be responsible for making strategic decisions regarding FirstNet's operations and ensuring the success of Congress's vision for the network. The Act requires that the Board be established no later than August 20, 2012.

II. Structure

The FirstNet Board of Directors will be composed of 15 individuals.³ The Act names the Secretary of Homeland Security, the Attorney General, and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget as permanent members of the Board.⁴ The Secretary of Commerce will select the remaining 12 members.⁵ Each Board member must have expertise in at least one of the following substantive areas: Public safety, technical, network, and financial.⁶ In addition, three Board members must represent the collective interests of states, localities, tribes, and territories; three Board members must have served as public safety professionals; and the Board as a whole should reflect geographical and regional diversity as well as rural and urban representation.⁷

Responsibilities of the Board will include creating the over-arching strategic framework for the public safety network, ensuring nationwide standards for use and access to the network based on commercial standards, working to deliver economies of scale for public safety, maximizing opportunities for long-term cost savings and improved functionality, integrating federal first responders and public-safety-related uses to maximize the efficiency of the new network, and formulating a fee collection system to ensure FirstNet self-sustainability.

III. Compensation and Status as Government Employees

FirstNet Board members will be appointed as federal government employees. FirstNet Board members

¹ See Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012 § 6201, Public Law 112-96, 126 Stat. 156 (2012).

² Id. § 6204(a).

³ Id. § 6204(b).

⁴ Id. § 6204(b)(1).

⁵ Id. § 6204(b)(1)(d).

⁶ Id. § 6204(b)(2)(B)(i).

⁷ Id. § 6204(b)(2)(A).

will be compensated at the daily rate of basic pay for level IV of the Executive Schedule (approximately \$155,000 per year).⁸ Each Board member must be a United States citizen, cannot be a registered lobbyist, and cannot be a registered agent of, employed by, or receive payments from, a foreign government. The Board will meet at the call of the Chair and not less than once each quarter. Initial Board members will serve one, two, or three year terms. Subsequent Board members will be appointed for a term of three years, and Board members may not serve more than two consecutive terms.

IV. Financial Disclosure and Conflicts of Interest

FirstNet Board members will be required to comply with certain federal conflict of interest statutes and ethics regulations, including some financial disclosure requirements. FirstNet Board members will generally be prohibited from participating on any particular matter that will have a direct and predictable effect on his or her personal financial interests or on the interests of the appointee's spouse, minor children, or non-Federal employer.

V. Selection Process

At the direction of the Secretary of Commerce, NTIA has been conducting outreach to the public safety community and industry to solicit nominations for candidates to the Board who satisfy the statutory requirements for membership. In addition, by this Notice, the Secretary of Commerce, through NTIA, will accept expressions of interest from any individual or organization who wishes to propose a candidate. All parties wishing to be considered should submit their full name, address, telephone number, email address, a current resume, and a statement of qualifications referencing the Act's eligibility requirements as described in this Notice.

The Secretary of Commerce will select FirstNet Board candidates based on the eligibility requirements in the Act and input and recommendations from NTIA. Board candidates will be evaluated based on their ability to contribute to the goals and objectives of FirstNet as set forth in the Act. Board candidates will be vetted through the Department of Commerce. FirstNet Board candidates may be subject to an appropriate background check for security clearance.

⁸ Id. § 6204(g)(1).