

Integrated Transponder tags), trapping (pipe traps), and release of fish. Permit 15730 authorizes SPAWN non-lethal and low levels of unintentional lethal take of juvenile ESA-listed salmonids and take of adult carcasses of these species. Permit 15730 does not authorize any intentional lethal take of ESA-listed salmonids or lethal or non-lethal take of live adult salmonids.

Dated: July 9, 2012.

Angela Somma,

Chief, Endangered Species Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XC103

Endangered and Threatened Species; Take of Anadromous Fish

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

ACTION: Notice of availability and request for comment.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that NMFS has prepared a draft Environmental Assessment (EA) under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of the potential effects of two direct take permits for hatchery operations in the Snake River basin involving Snake River fall Chinook salmon. The permit applicants are the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), Idaho Department of Fish and Game, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) on behalf of the Nez Perce Tribe (NPT). The proposed permits would expire on December 31, 2017. This document serves to notify the public of the draft EA for public review, comment, and submission of written data, views, arguments or other relevant information before a final decision on whether to issue a Finding of No Significant Impact is made by NMFS. All comments and other information received will become part of the public record and will be available for review pursuant to section 10(c) of the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

DATES: Comments and other submissions must be received at the appropriate address or fax number (see **ADDRESSES**) no later than 5 p.m. Pacific time on July 27, 2012.

ADDRESSES: Written responses to the environmental assessment should be sent to Brett Farman, National Marine Fisheries Services, Salmon Management Division, 1201 NE. Lloyd Boulevard, Suite 1100, Portland, OR 97232. Comments may also be submitted by email to: SnakeFallEA.nwr@noaa.gov. Include in the subject line of the email comment the following identifier: Comments on Snake Fall Chinook Hatchery Assessment. Comments may also be sent via facsimile (fax) to (503) 872-2737. Requests for copies of the draft environmental assessment should be directed to the National Marine Fisheries Services, Salmon Management Division, 1201 N.E. Lloyd Boulevard, Suite 1100, Portland, OR 97232. Comments received will also be available for public inspection, by appointment, during normal business hours by calling (503) 230-5418.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Brett Farman at (503) 231-6222 or email: brett.farman@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Species Covered in This Notice

Chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*): Threatened, naturally produced and artificially propagated Snake River fall-run.

Background

Section 9 of the ESA and Federal regulations prohibit the "taking" of a species listed as endangered or threatened. The term "take" is defined under the ESA to mean harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct. NMFS may issue permits to take listed species for any act otherwise prohibited by section 9 for scientific purposes or to enhance the propagation or survival of the affected species, under section 10(a)(1)(A) of the ESA. NMFS regulations governing permits for threatened and endangered species are promulgated at 50 CFR 222.307.

The proposed action is to issue the two section 10(a)(1)(A) direct take permits. The receipt of the applications for the permits was previously noticed (76 FR 43986, July 22, 2011), and comments were invited. Hatchery operations to be permitted would be carried out at the Nez Perce Tribal Hatchery, and at Lyons Ferry, Oxbow, and Irrigon Hatcheries, and associated facilities. The purpose of these programs is to mitigate for losses of Snake River fall Chinook salmon caused by the four lower Snake River dams, the Federal Columbia River Power System, and the Hells Canyon dam complex.

Authority

NEPA requires Federal agencies to conduct an environmental analysis of their proposed actions to determine if the actions may affect the human environment. NMFS expects to take action on two ESA section 10(a)(1)(A) permits. Therefore, NMFS is seeking public input on the scope of the required NEPA analysis, including the range of reasonable alternatives and associated impacts of any alternatives.

Dated: July 9, 2012.

Angela Somma,

Chief, Endangered Species Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XZ28

Marine Mammals; Subsistence Taking of Northern Fur Seals; St. Paul Island

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

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: NMFS announces the receipt of a petition for rulemaking under the Administrative Procedure Act (APA). The Pribilof Island Community of St. Paul Island, Aleut Community of St. Paul Island-Tribal Government (St. Paul) petitioned NMFS to revise regulations governing the subsistence taking of northern fur seals on St. Paul Island. St. Paul's petition requests that NMFS revise the regulations to allow residents of St. Paul, Alaska to: Take male young of the year (less than 1 year old) fur seals; take a total of up to 3,000 fur seals annually compared to 2,000 currently allowed, including up to 1,500 male young of the year and up to 1,500 sub-adult (1-4 years old) males; hunt or harvest fur seals during a total of 329 days annually, rather than the 47-day harvest season provided for under existing regulations; and take fur seals with firearms, in addition to harvesting (the current method of herding, stunning, and immediate exsanguination, which is allowed under existing regulations). NMFS solicits public comment on all aspects of this request.