

This proposed program would restrict its focus on Alaska pinnipeds under the statutory jurisdiction of NMFS (seals and sea lions); proposals focusing on marine mammals under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service would not be eligible.

The objectives of a potential Alaska Pinniped Research Program would include: 1) Supporting effective conservation and management of seals, sea lions, and Northern fur seals in waters off Alaska; and 2) Implementing high-priority research objectives or address species conservation priorities specified in a NMFS recovery plan, conservations plan, research plans (including those developed with Alaska Native co-management organizations), or post-delisting monitoring plans (for copies of these plans see **ADDRESSES**).

This is not a notice of availability of grant funds; moreover, any future funding is contingent on availability of funds. NMFS is seeking input on specific program priorities that might be considered for inclusion in an annual Alaska Pinniped Research Program that addresses the above-stated objectives. If NMFS proceeds with such a program, NMFS will issue a Federal Funding Opportunity notice to solicit applications for grants to address the selected priorities.

Dated: October 2, 2014.

Perry F. Gayaldo,

Deputy Director, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 2014-23928 Filed 10-7-14; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RIN 0648-XD528]

New England Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice; public meeting.

SUMMARY: The New England Fishery Management Council's (Council) Observer Policy Committee will meet to review scientific information affecting New England fisheries in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ).

DATES: The meeting will be held on Thursday, October 23, 2014 beginning at 9:30 a.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Sheraton Colonial Hotel; One

Audubon Road; Wakefield, MA 01880; telephone: (781) 245-9300; fax: (781) 245-0842.

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

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Thomas A. Nies, Executive Director, New England Fishery Management Council; telephone: (978) 465-0492.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: *Agenda items:*

The Observer Policy Committee will meet to: Review progress regarding development of NMFS-led omnibus amendment to establish provisions for industry-funded monitoring across all Council-managed fisheries; review and discuss timeline; discuss details of omnibus industry-funded amendment alternatives and develop related Committee recommendations and plan next meeting. They will address other business as necessary.

Although non-emergency issues not contained in this agenda may come before this group for discussion, in accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act), those issues may not be the subject of formal action during this meeting. Actions will be restricted to those issues specifically identified in this notice and any issues arising after publication of this notice that require emergency action under Section 305(c) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, provided the public has been notified of the Council's intent to take final action to address the emergency.

Special Accommodations

This meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Thomas A. Nies (see **ADDRESSES**) at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

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

Dated: October 3, 2014.

Tracey L. Thompson,

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

[FR Doc. 2014-24022 Filed 10-7-14; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XD534

Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and

Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of open public meetings.

SUMMARY: This notice sets forth the schedule and proposed agenda of a forthcoming meeting of the Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee (MAFAC). The members will discuss and provide advice on issues outlined in the agenda below.

DATES: The meeting is scheduled for October 23, 2014, 4-5:30 p.m., Eastern Daylight Time.

ADDRESSES: The public meeting will be conducted by telephone. Public access is available at 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Any member of the public wishing to attend the public teleconference may contact Heidi Lovett, (301) 427-8004; email: heidi.lovett@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The MAFAC was established by the Secretary of Commerce (Secretary), and, since 1971, advises the Secretary on all living marine resource matters that are the responsibility of the Department of Commerce. The charter and other information are located online at <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/ocs/mafac/>.

Matters To Be Considered

The Committee is convening to discuss and finalize comments on the proposed rule for the Gulf of Mexico Aquaculture Plan for submission to the NOAA Fisheries Assistant Administrator and to consider other administrative matters. This agenda is subject to change.

Special Accommodations

These meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Heidi Lovett, 301-427-8004 by October 16, 2014.

Dated: October 2, 2014.

Eileen Sobeck,

Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 2014-24049 Filed 10-7-14; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XA122

Marine Mammals; File No. 14330

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 a major amendment to Permit No. 14330-01 has been issued to the Aleut Community of St. Paul Island, Tribal Government, Ecosystem Conservation Office, St. Paul Island, AK 99660.

ADDRESSES: The permit amendment and related documents are available for review upon written request or by appointment in the Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 13705, Silver Spring, MD 20910; telephone: (301) 427-8401; fax: (301) 713-0376.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Brendan Hurley or Amy Sloan; telephone: (301) 427-8401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On July 17, 2013, notice was published in the *Federal Register* (78 FR 42756) that a request for an amendment to Permit No. 14330-01 for research on northern fur seals (*Callorhinus ursinus*) and incidental disturbance to Steller sea lions (*Eumetopias jubatus*) and harbor seals (*Phoca vitulina*) 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.*), 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.*).

Permit No. 14330-02 authorizes the permit holder to conduct activities to fulfill their Biosampling, Disentanglement, and Island Sentinel program responsibilities as established under the co-management agreement between NMFS and the Aleut Communities. Activities include northern fur seal (1) disentanglement; (2) sample collection from dead animals and sample export; and (3) haulout and rookery observations, monitoring, and remote camera maintenance. The permit amendment authorizes additional takes of northern fur seals for new habitat use studies, incorporates incidental disturbance of Steller sea lions and harbor seals during other fur seal studies without increasing authorized takes, consolidates existing fur seal authorized takes of certain age and sex

categories, consolidates existing fur seal authorized takes for studies with similar types of incidental disturbance, and extends the permit for one year. The permit amendment expires on August 31, 2015.

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), NMFS has determined 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.

As required by the ESA, issuance of this permit was based on a finding that such permit: (1) Was applied for in good faith; (2) will not operate to the disadvantage of such endangered species; and (3) is consistent with the purposes and policies set forth in section 2 of the ESA.

Dated: September 24, 2014.

Julia Harrison,

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

[FR Doc. 2014-23940 Filed 10-7-14; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XD256

Takes of Marine Mammals Incidental to Specified Activities; Low-Energy Marine Geophysical Survey in the Scotia Sea and South Atlantic Ocean, September to October 2014

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

ACTION: Notice; issuance of an Incidental Harassment Authorization (IHA).

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA), notification is hereby given that NMFS has issued an IHA to the National Science Foundation (NSF) Division of Polar Programs, and Antarctic Support Contract (ASC) on behalf of two research institutions, University of Texas at Austin and University of Memphis, to take marine mammals, by Level B harassment, incidental to conducting a low-energy marine geophysical (seismic) survey in the Scotia Sea and South Atlantic Ocean, September to October 2014.

DATES: Effective September 20, 2014, to December 1, 2014.

ADDRESSES: A copy of the IHA and the application are available by writing Jolie Harrison, Chief, Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910 or by telephone the contacts listed below (see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**).

An electronic copy of the IHA application containing a list of the references used in this document may be obtained by writing to the address specified above, telephoning the contact listed here (see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**) or visiting the Internet at: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/permits/incidental/>. Documents cited in this notice, including the IHA application, may also be viewed by appointment, during regular business hours, at the aforementioned address.

An "Environmental Assessment on the Issuance of an Incidental Harassment Authorization to the National Science Foundation and Antarctic Support Contract to Take Marine Mammals by Harassment Incidental to a Low-energy Marine Geophysical Survey in the Scotia Sea and South Atlantic Ocean, September to October 2014" was prepared by NMFS. NMFS also issued a Biological Opinion under section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) to evaluate the effects of the low-energy seismic survey and IHA on marine species listed as threatened and endangered. The NMFS Biological Opinion is available online at: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/consultations/opinions.htm>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Howard Goldstein or Jolie Harrison, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 301-427-8401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Sections 101(a)(5)(A) and (D) of the MMPA, (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*) direct the Secretary of Commerce (Secretary) to allow, upon request, the incidental, but not intentional, taking of small numbers of marine mammals by United States citizens who engage in a specified activity (other than commercial fishing) within a specified geographical region if certain findings are made and either regulations are issued or, if the taking is limited to harassment, a notice of a proposed authorization is provided to the public for review.

An authorization for incidental takings shall be granted if NMFS finds that the taking will have a negligible impact on the species or stock(s), will