

Dated: December 2, 2014.

Julia Harrison,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XD340

Marine Mammals; File No. 18523

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

ACTION: Notice; issuance of permit.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that a permit has been issued to Heather Liwanag, Ph.D., Adelphi University, Biology Department, 1 South Avenue, Garden City, NY 11530, to receive, import, and export marine mammal specimens for scientific research purposes.

ADDRESSES: The permit 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; phone (301) 427-8401; fax (301) 713-0376.

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

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On July 2, 2014, notice was published in the *Federal Register* (79 FR 37719) that a request for a permit to receive, import, and export marine mammal specimens for scientific research had been submitted by the above-named applicant. The requested permit 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. 18523-00 authorizes the holder to receive, import, and export unlimited samples from up to 1,500 individuals of each species of cetacean, and from up to 1,500 individuals of

each species of pinniped (excluding walrus), annually. Marine mammal samples may be obtained from the following sources: (1) Animals killed during legal subsistence harvests; (2) animals that died incidental to legal commercial fishing operations; (3) animals stranded in foreign countries; (4) samples collected from captive animals; and (5) samples from other authorized researchers and collections. Samples collected from stranded animals in the U.S. and received under separate authorization may be exported and re-imported. The permit expires on October 31, 2019.

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), a final determination has been made that the activity proposed is categorically excluded from the requirement to prepare an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement.

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: December 2, 2014.

Julia Harrison,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XD593

Takes of Marine Mammals Incidental to Specified Activities; Taking Marine Mammals Incidental to the U.S. Air Force Conducting Maritime Weapon Systems Evaluation Program Operational Testing Within the Eglin Gulf Test and Training Range

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

ACTION: Notice; proposed incidental harassment authorization; request for comments.

SUMMARY: NMFS received an application from the U.S. Department of the Air Force, Headquarters 96th Air Base Wing (Air Force), Eglin Air Force Base (Eglin AFB), requesting an Incidental Harassment Authorization

(Authorization) to take marine mammals, by harassment, incidental to a Maritime Weapon Systems Evaluation Program (Maritime WSEP) within the Eglin Gulf Test and Training Range in the Gulf of Mexico.

Eglin AFB's activities are military readiness activities per the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA), as amended by the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2004. Per the MMPA, NMFS requests comments on its proposal to issue an Authorization to Eglin AFB to take, by harassment, two species of marine mammals during the specified activity for a period of one year.

DATES: NMFS must receive comments and information no later than January 7, 2015.

ADDRESSES: Address comments on the application to Jolie Harrison, Chief, Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910. The mailbox address for providing email comments is *ITP.Cody@noaa.gov*. Please include 0648-XD593 in the subject line. Comments sent via email to *ITP.Cody@noaa.gov*, including all attachments, must not exceed a 25-megabyte file size. NMFS is not responsible for email comments sent to addresses other than the one provided here.

Instructions: All submitted comments are a part of the public record and NMFS will post them to <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/permits/incidental/military.htm> without change. All Personal Identifying Information (for example, name, address, etc.) voluntarily submitted by the commenter may be publicly accessible. Do not submit confidential business information or otherwise sensitive or protected information.

To obtain an electronic copy of the application, a list of the references used in this document, and Eglin AFB's Draft Environmental Assessment (DEA) titled, "Maritime Weapons System Evaluation Program," visit the internet at: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/permits/incidental/military.htm>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jeannine Cody, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, (301) 427-8401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Section 101(a)(5)(D) of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended (MMPA; 16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*) directs the Secretary of Commerce to allow, upon request, the incidental, but not intentional, taking of small