

species apart from those that were considered in the consultation on FTA's action.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

NMFS prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) and analyzed the potential impacts to marine mammals that would result from WSDOT's Vashon Seismic Retrofit Project. A Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) was signed in May 2015. A copy of the EA and FONSI is available upon request (see **ADDRESSES**).

Authorization

NMFS has issued an IHA to WSDOT for the potential harassment of small numbers of nine marine mammal species incidental to the Vashon Seismic Retrofit Project in Washington State, provided the previously mentioned mitigation, monitoring, and reporting requirements are incorporated.

Dated: June 2, 2015.

Donna S. Wieting,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-BE51

Takes of Marine Mammals Incidental to Specified Activities; U.S. Navy Joint Logistics Over-the-Shore Training Activities in Virginia and North Carolina

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

ACTION: Notice of issuance of a Letter of Authorization.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA), as amended, and implementing regulations, notification is hereby given that a Letter of Authorization (LOA) has been issued to the U.S. Navy (NAVY) to take marine mammals, by harassment, incidental to the Joint Logistics Over-the-Shore (JLOTS) training activities conducted in nearshore waters at the Joint Expeditionary Base (JEB) Little Creek-Fort Story in Virginia and at Camp Lejeune in North Carolina, from June 2, 2015 through June 1, 2020.

DATES: Effective from June 2, 2015, through June 1, 2020.

ADDRESSES: The LOA and supporting documentation may be obtained by writing to Jolie Harrison, Supervisor, Incidental Take Program, Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910, calling the contact listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**, or visiting the Internet at: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/permits/incidental.htm>. Documents cited in this notice may also be viewed, by appointment, during regular business hours at the above address.

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

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Section 101(a)(5)(A) of the MMPA (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*) directs the Secretary of Commerce (Secretary) to allow, upon request, the incidental, but not intentional taking of small numbers of marine mammals by U.S. citizens who engage in a specified activity (other than commercial fishing) within a specified geographical region if certain findings are made and regulations are issued. Under the MMPA, the term "take" means to harass, hunt, capture, or kill or to attempt to harass, hunt, capture, or kill any marine mammal.

Authorization for incidental takings may be granted if NMFS finds that the taking will have a negligible impact on the species or stock(s), will not have an unmitigable adverse impact on the availability of the species or stock(s) for certain subsistence uses, and that the permissible methods of taking and requirements pertaining to the mitigation, monitoring and reporting of such taking are set forth. NMFS has defined "negligible impact" in 50 CFR 216.103 as: "an impact resulting from the specified activity that cannot be reasonably expected to, and is not reasonably likely to, adversely affect the species or stock through effects on annual rates of recruitment or survival."

The National Defense Authorization Act of 2004 (NDAA) (Public Law 108-136) removed the "small numbers" and "specified geographical region" limitations and amended the definition of "harassment" as it applies to a "military readiness activity" to read as follows (Section 3(18)(B) of the MMPA): "(i) any act that injures or has the significant potential to injure a marine mammal or marine mammal stock in the wild [Level A Harassment]; or (ii) any act that disturbs or is likely to disturb a marine mammal or marine mammal stock in the wild by causing disruption

of natural behavioral patterns, including, but not limited to, migration, surfacing, nursing, breeding, feeding, or sheltering, to a point where such behavioral patterns are abandoned or significantly altered [Level B Harassment]." Because the Navy's activities constitute military readiness activities, they are not subject to the small numbers or specified geographic region limitations.

Regulations governing the take of five species of marine mammals, by Level B harassment, incidental to the JLOTS training activities were effective on June 2, 2015. These regulations are effective from June 2, 2015, through June 1, 2020. The species which are authorized for taking by Level B harassment are: Bottlenose and Atlantic spotted dolphins. For detailed information on this action, please refer to the final rule published on June 2, 2015. These regulations include mitigation, monitoring, and reporting requirements for the incidental take of marine mammals during the specified activities.

This LOA is effective from June 2, 2015, through June 1, 2020, and authorizes the incidental take of the five marine mammal species listed above that may result from launches, aircraft and helicopter operations, and harbor activities related to vehicles from VAFB, California.

Dated: June 2, 2015.

Donna S. Wieting,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XD970

Pacific Whiting; Advisory Panel; Joint Management Committee

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

ACTION: Notice; call for nominations.

SUMMARY: NMFS is soliciting nominations for appointments to the United States Advisory Panel (AP) and the Joint Management Committee (JMC) established in the Agreement between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of Canada on Pacific Hake/Whiting (Pacific Whiting Treaty). Nominations are being sought to fill six positions on the AP beginning on September 16, 2015, and

one position on the JMC starting November 1, 2015. Terms are 4 years, and appointees will be eligible for reappointment at the expiration of the terms.

DATES: Nominations must be received by July 30, 2015.

ADDRESSES: You may submit nominations by any of the following methods:

Email: whiting.nominations.wcr@noaa.gov.

Fax: 206-526-6736, Attn: Frank Lockhart.

Mail: William W. Stelle, Jr., Regional Administrator, West Coast Region, NMFS, 7600 Sand Point Way NE., Seattle, WA 98115-0070.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Frank Lockhart, (206) 526-6142 or Miako Ushio, (206) 526-4644

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Pacific Whiting Treaty Committees

The Pacific Whiting Act of 2006 (Pacific Whiting Act) (16 U.S.C. 7001-10) implements the 2003 Agreement between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of Canada on Pacific Hake/Whiting. Among other provisions, the Pacific Whiting Act provides for the establishment of a JMC and AP.

The JMC reviews the advice of two scientific bodies and the AP, and recommends to the Parties the coast-wide total allowable catch of Pacific whiting each year. Four individuals represent the United States on the JMC; one official from NOAA, one member of the Pacific Fishery Management Council, one representative of the treaty Indian tribes with treaty fishing rights to Pacific whiting, and one representative from the commercial fishing sector. NMFS is soliciting nominations for the representative of the commercial sector of the whiting fishing industry concerned with the offshore whiting resource (16 U.S.C. 7001(a)(1)(D)) through this notice.

The AP advises the JMC on bilateral Pacific whiting management issues. Eight individuals represent the United States on the AP, and nominations for six of those individuals (*id.* at section 7005) are solicited through this notice.

Members appointed to the U.S. sections of the AP and JMC will be reimbursed for necessary travel expenses in accordance with Federal Travel Regulations and sections 5701, 5702, 5704 through 5708, and 5731 of Title 5. (*Id.* at section 7008). NMFS anticipates that 1-2 meetings of the AP and of the JMC will be held annually,

and these meetings will be held in the United States or Canada. AP and JMC members will need a valid U.S. passport.

The Pacific Whiting Act of 2006 also states that while performing their appointed duties, members "other than officers or employees of the United States Government, shall not be considered to be Federal employees while performing such service, except for purposes of injury compensation or tort claims liability as provided in chapter 81 of title 5 and chapter 171 of title 28." (*Id.*)

Information on the Pacific Whiting Treaty, including current committee members can be found at: www.westcoast.fisheries.noaa.gov/fisheries/management/whiting/pacific_whiting_treaty.html.

Nominations

Nomination packages for appointments should include:

- (1) The name of the applicant or nominee, position they are being nominated for and a description of his/her interest in Pacific whiting; and
- (2) A statement of background and/or description of how the following qualifications are met.

Advisory Panel Qualifications

AP member nominees must be knowledgeable or experienced in the harvesting, processing, marketing, management, conservation, or research of the offshore Pacific whiting resource; and must not be employees of the United States government.

Joint Management Committee Qualifications

The JMC nominee must be from the commercial sector of the Pacific whiting fishing industry concerned with the offshore Pacific whiting resource, and must be knowledgeable or experienced concerning the offshore whiting resource.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 7001 *et seq.*

Dated: June 3, 2015.

Emily H. Menashes,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

The Department of Commerce will submit to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for clearance the following proposal for collection of information under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35).

Agency: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

Title: Marine Debris Program

Performance Progress Report.

OMB Control Number: 0648-xxxx.

Form Number(s): None.

Type of Request: Regular (request for a new information collection).

Number of Respondents: 70.

Average Hours per Response: 10

hours per semi-annual report.

Burden Hours: 1,400 hours.

Needs and Uses: The NOAA Marine Debris Program (MDP) supports national and international efforts to research, prevent, and reduce the impacts of marine debris. The MDP is a centralized office within NOAA that coordinates and supports activities, both within the bureau and with other federal agencies, that address marine debris and its impacts. In addition to inter-agency coordination, the MDP uses partnerships with state and local agencies, tribes, non-governmental organizations, academia, and industry to investigate and solve the problems that stem from marine debris through research, prevention, and reduction activities, in order to protect and conserve our nation's marine environment and ensure navigation safety.

The Marine Debris Research, Prevention, and Reduction Act (33 U.S.C. 1951 *et seq.*) as amended by the Marine Debris Act Amendments of 2012 (Pub. L. 112-213, Title VI, Sec. 603, 126 Stat. 1576, December 20, 2012) outlines three central program components for the MDP to undertake: (1) Mapping, identification, impact assessment, removal, and prevention; (2) reducing and preventing fishing gear loss; and (3) outreach to stakeholders and the general public. To address these components, the Marine Debris Act authorized the MDP to establish several competitive grant programs on marine debris research, prevention and removal that provide federal funding to non-federal applicants throughout the coastal United States and territories.

The terms and conditions of the financial assistance awarded through