

NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 13705, Silver Spring, MD 20910; phone (301) 427-8401; fax (301) 713-0376.

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 and Conservation 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: Rosa L. González or Amy Sloan, (301) 427-8401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The subject amendment to Permit No. 15510 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 222-226), and the Fur Seal Act of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1151 *et seq.*).

Permit No. 15510, issued on April 25, 2011 (76 FR 25308), authorizes Dr. Burns to conduct physiology studies on development, thermoregulation, muscle performance, oxygen stores, and hormonal and other regulatory processes using marine mammal parts. Annually, Dr. Burns can obtain samples from up to 50 animals of each of the following species: harp (*Pagophilus groenlandica*), hooded (*Cystophora cristata*), gray (*Halichoerus grypus*), bearded (*Erignathus barbatus*), ringed (*Phoca hispida*), harbor (*Phoca vitulina*), spotted (*Phoca largha*), and ribbon (*Histiophoca fasciata*) seals; and to obtain samples annually from up to 6 captive Northern fur seals, *Callorhinus ursinus*; and 6 captive Steller Sea lions, *Eumetopias jubatus*. Samples may be from subsistence-harvested animals in Alaska, and other scientific and/or subsistence collections including but not limited to the national waters of Canada, Norway, the United Kingdom, and in international waters. Samples may be collected, received nationally, and imported and exported worldwide over a five-year period for laboratory analysis to support the research objectives. The permit holder is

requesting the permit be amended to increase the number of harbor seals from which samples may be collected, received, imported, and exported from 50 to 100 annually; and, to extend the permit for 1 year. The permit would expire April 30, 2017.

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

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: December 2, 2015.

Julia Harrison,

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

[FR Doc. 2015-30842 Filed 12-7-15; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

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: Greater Atlantic Region Surfclam and Ocean Quahog ITQ Administration.

OMB Control Number: 0648-0240.

Form Number(s): None.

Type of Request: Regular (extension of a currently approved information collection).

Number of Respondents: 189.

Average Hours per Response: ITQ permit application form, review of a pre-filled ITQ ownership form for renewing entities, ITQ transfer form, 5 minutes each; 1 hour to complete the ITQ ownership form for new applicants; and 30 minutes for the application to shuck surfclams and ocean quahogs at sea. The requirements under the PSP protocol are based on the number of vessels that land surfclams or ocean quahogs and the number of trips taken into the area, with a total estimated annual burden of 2,400 hours.

Burden Hours: 2,538.

Needs and Uses: This request is for an extension of a currently approved collection associated with the Atlantic surfclam and ocean quahog fisheries. National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Greater Atlantic Region manages these fisheries in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of the Northeastern United States through the Atlantic Surfclam and Ocean Quahog Fishery Management Plan (FMP). The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council prepared the FMP pursuant to the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act).

The recordkeeping and reporting requirements at §§ 648.74, 648.75, and 648.76 form the basis for this collection of information. We request information from surfclam and ocean quahog individual transferable quota (ITQ) permit holders to issue ITQ permits and to process and track requests from permit holders to transfer quota share or cage tags. We also request information from surfclam and ocean quahog ITQ permit holders to track and properly account for surfclam and ocean quahog harvest shucked at sea. Because there is not a standard conversion factor for estimating unshucked product from shucked product, NMFS requires vessels that shuck product at sea to carry on board the vessel a NMFS-approved observer to certify the amount of these clams harvested. This information, upon receipt, results in an efficient and accurate database for management and monitoring of fisheries of the Northeastern U.S. EEZ.

Georges Bank has been closed to the harvest of surfclams and ocean quahogs since 1990 due to red tide blooms that cause paralytic shellfish poisoning (PSP). In 2013, a portion of Georges Bank was reopened with certain restrictions. We request information from surfclam and ocean quahog ITQ permit holders who fish in the reopened portion of the Georges Bank Closed Area to ensure compliance with the Protocol for Onboard Screening and Dockside Testing in Molluscan Shellfish. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration, the commercial fishing industry, and NMFS developed the PSP protocol to test and verify that clams harvested from Georges Bank continue to be safe for human consumption. The National Shellfish Sanitation Program adopted the PSP protocol at the October 2011 Interstate Shellfish Sanitation Conference.

Affected Public: Business or other for-profit organizations.

Frequency: Annually and on occasion.

Respondent's Obligation: Mandatory.

This information collection request may be viewed at reginfo.gov. Follow the instructions to view Department of Commerce collections currently under review by OMB.

Written comments and recommendations for the proposed information collection should be sent within 30 days of publication of this notice to OIRA_Submission@omb.eop.gov or fax to (202) 395-5806.

Dated: December 3, 2015.

Sarah Brabson,

NOAA PRA Clearance Officer.

[FR Doc. 2015-30872 Filed 12-7-15; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XE129

Marine Mammals; File No. 19439

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 Daniel P. Costa, Ph.D., University of California at Santa Cruz, Long Marine Laboratory, 100 Shaffer Road, Santa Cruz, CA 95064 to conduct research on pinnipeds in Antarctica.

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 Rosa L. González, (301) 427-8401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On August 28, 2015, notice was published in the *Federal Register* (80 FR 52255) that a request for a permit to conduct research on pinnipeds in Antarctica 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.*), and the regulations governing the taking and importing of marine mammals (50 CFR part 216).

The permit authorizes the permit holder to capture and sample leopard (*Hydrurga leptonyx*), crabeater (*Lobodon carcinophaga*), southern elephant (*Mirounga leonina*), Ross

(*Ommatophoca rossii*), Weddell (*Leptonychotes weddellii*), and Antarctic fur (*Arctocephalus gazella*) seals throughout their range for scientific research. Researchers may capture up to 40 animals per species per year to collect tissue samples, morphometrics, and metabolic and physiological measurements, apply identifying marks, and attach instruments; as well as an additional 50 pups of each species for marking, morphometrics, and minimal sample collection. An additional 100 each of crabeater, leopard, and Ross seals, 500 southern elephant seals, and 1000 each of Weddell seals and Antarctic fur seals may be taken annually via Level B harassment by incidental disturbance during captures, opportunistic sample collection, and resights. The permit also authorizes unintentional mortality or serious injury of up to four animals per species annually not to exceed ten animals per species over the life of the permit. Blood and tissue samples would be imported from the Southern Ocean and Antarctica to the United States and exported world-wide for analyses. The permit expires October 1, 2020.

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.

Dated: December 2, 2015.

Julia Harrison,

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

[FR Doc. 2015-30841 Filed 12-7-15; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XC033

Marine Mammals; File No. 17157

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 Stephen John Trumble, Ph.D., Baylor University, 101 Bagby Ave., Waco, TX 76706, has applied for an amendment to Scientific Research Permit No. 17157-01.

DATES: Written, telefaxed, or email comments must be received on or before January 7, 2016.

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. 17157 from the list of available applications.

These documents are also available 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.

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. 17157 in the subject line of the email comment.

Those individuals requesting a public hearing should submit a written request to the Chief, Permits and Conservation 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: Jennifer Skidmore or Amy Sloan, (301) 427-8401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The subject amendment to Permit No. 17157-01 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. 17157, issued on July 18, 2012, and amended on November 7, 2014, authorizes the receipt, import and export of up to 25 earplugs annually of each of the following species of whale: Blue (*Balaenoptera musculus*), sei (*B. borealis*), minke (*B. acutorostrata*), humpback (*Megaptera novaeangliae*), gray (*Eschrichtius robustus*), bowhead (*Balaena mysticetus*), fin (*B. physalus*), and sperm (*Physeter macrocephalus*). The samples may be obtained from natural history museums as well as from collections in Barrow, AK, of bowhead whale subsistence harvests.