

of 1973, as amended (ESA; 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).

The applicant requests a five-year permit to locate and describe surface-pelagic drift communities of the Atlantic Ocean and Gulf of Mexico that serve as developmental habitat for surface-pelagic juvenile and neonate sea turtles, to quantify threats to pelagic sea turtles, and to gather information on their life-history, genetics, movements, behavior, and diet. Researchers would conduct vessel surveys to count and pursue for capture by dip net up to 300 loggerhead, 200 green, 60 hawksbill, 130 Kemp's ridley and 10 leatherback sea turtles annually. An additional 150 loggerheads and 440 leatherbacks could be harassed annually during vessel surveys but would not be pursued for capture. Depending on life stage and size, captured sea turtles would have the following procedures performed prior to release: Measure, weigh, oral swab, esophageal lavage, skin and scute biopsy, flipper and passive integrated transponder tag, and/or epoxy attachment of a satellite or VHF transmitter. Voided fecal samples also would be collected opportunistically.

Dated: December 29, 2015.

Julia Harrison,

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

[FR Doc. 2015–33182 Filed 1–5–16; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648–XD607

Marine Mammals; File No. 18824

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 Briana Witteveen, Ph.D., University of Alaska, Fairbanks, Kodiak Seafood and Marine Science Center, 118 Trident Way,

Kodiak, AK, 99615, to conduct research on humpback (*Megaptera novaeangliae*); killer (*Orcinus orca*); gray (*Eschrichtius robustus*); North Pacific Right (*Eubaelana japonica*); fin (*Balaenoptera physalus*); sei (*B. borealis*); minke whales (*B. acutorostrata*); blue (*B. musculus*); and sperm whales (*Physeter macrocephalus*). Additionally, harbor (*Phocoena phocoena*) and Dall's porpoises (*P. dalli*), Pacific white-sided dolphins (*Lagenorhynchus obliquidens*), Northern fur (*Callorhinus ursinus*) and harbor seals (*Phoca vitulina*), and Steller sea lions (*Eumetopias jubatus*) may be incidentally harassed.

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: Jennifer Skidmore or Courtney Smith, (301) 427–8401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On November 21, 2014, notice was published in the **Federal Register** (79 FR 69432) that a request for a permit to conduct research on the above listed species 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.*), and the regulations governing the taking, importing, and exporting of endangered and threatened species (50 CFR parts 222–226).

The permit authorizes non-lethal take using vessels to: Collect identification photographs; record vocalizations; conduct biopsy sampling; collect prey parts and sloughed skin; attach suction-cup tags; and document behavioral response to acoustic deterrents. Research may occur year-round within the Gulf of Alaska. The purpose of this research is to improve understanding of the foraging behavior, prey use, and habitat overlap among sympatric whale species throughout their habitat. The

permit is valid through December 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.

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 29, 2015.

Julia Harrison,

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

[FR Doc. 2015–33183 Filed 1–5–16; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Office of the Secretary

[Transmittal No. 14–01]

36(b)(1) Arms Sales Notification

AGENCY: Department of Defense, Defense Security Cooperation Agency.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Defense is publishing the unclassified text of a section 36(b)(1) arms sales notification. This is published to fulfill the requirements of section 155 of Public Law 104–164 dated July 21, 1996.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Sarah A. Ragan or Heather N. Harwell, DSCA/LMO, (703) 604–1546/(703) 607–5339.

The following is a copy of a letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Transmittal 14–01 with attached Policy Justification and Sensitivity of Technology.

Dated: December 31, 2015.

Aaron Siegel,

Alternate OSD Federal Register Liaison Officer, Department of Defense.

BILLING CODE 5001–06–P