

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration****Coral Reef Conservation Program**

AGENCY: Coral Reef Conservation Program, Office for Coastal Management, National Ocean Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of public meeting, notice of public comment.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given of a public meeting of the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force (USCRTF). The meeting will be held in Washington, DC, at the U.S. Department of Interior South Building, 1925 Constitution Avenue NW. The meeting provides a forum for coordinated planning and action among federal agencies, state and territorial governments, and nongovernmental partners. The meeting will be held Thursday, February 18, 2016. Additional workshops will be on Tuesday February 16; Wednesday, February 17; and Friday, February 19. Registration is requested for all events associated with the meeting.

This meeting has time allotted for public comment. All public comments must be submitted in written format. A written summary of the meeting will be posted on the USCRTF Web site within two months of occurrence. For information about the meeting, registering and submitting public comments, go to <http://www.coralreef.gov>.

Commenters may address the meeting, the role of the USCRTF, or general coral reef conservation issues. Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comments, you should be aware that your entire comment, including personal identifying information may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Established by Presidential Executive Order 13089 in 1998, the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force mission is to lead, coordinate and strengthen U.S. government actions to better preserve and protect coral reef ecosystems. Co-chaired by the Departments of Commerce and Interior, Task Force members include leaders of 12 federal agencies, seven U.S. states and territories and three freely associated states.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Jennifer Koss, NOAA USCRTF Steering Committee Point of Contact, NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program, 1305 East-West Highway, N/OCRM, Silver Spring, MD 20910 at 301-533-0777 or Cheryl Fossani, USCRTF Executive Secretary, U.S. Department of Interior, MS-3530-MIB, 1849 C Street NW., Washington, DC 20240 at (202) 208-5004 or visit the USCRTF Web site at <http://www.coralreef.gov>

Dated: December 30, 2015.

Donna Rivelli,

Deputy Associate Assistant Administrator for Management and Deputy CFO/CAO, Ocean Services and Coastal Zone Management, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

[FR Doc. 2016-00017 Filed 1-12-16; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration****RIN 0648-XB157****Marine Mammals; File Nos. 14856 and 14809**

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

ACTION: Notice; issuance of permit amendments.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that major amendments to Permit No. 14809-01 and Permit No. 14856-03 have been issued to Douglas Nowacek, Ph.D., Duke University Marine Laboratory, 135 Duke Marine Lab Rd., Beaufort, NC 28516 and Bruce R. Mate, Ph.D., Hatfield Marine Science Center, Oregon State University, Newport, OR 97365, respectively.

ADDRESSES: The permit amendments 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 Hapeman or Carrie Hubbard, (301) 427-8401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On June 29, 2015 and April 2, 2015, notices were published in the **Federal Register** (80 FR 36975 and 80 FR 17721, respectively) that a request for amendments to Permit Nos. 14809-01 and 14856-03 to conduct research on

marine mammals had been submitted by the above-named applicants. The requested permit amendments have 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).

Permit No. 14809-01 authorizes Dr. Nowacek to conduct comparative research on 34 species/stocks of cetaceans in the North Atlantic, North Pacific and Southern Oceans. Authorized activities include suction cup tagging, acoustic playbacks, passive acoustics, biopsy sampling, photo-identification, behavioral observations, and incidental harassment during vessel surveys. The research objectives are to: (1) Document baseline foraging and social behavior of cetacean species under different ecological conditions; (2) place these behaviors in a population-level context; and (3) determine how these species respond to various natural sound sources. The permit has been amended (No. 02) to authorize the use of dart/barb tags during tagging efforts on Cuvier's beaked whales (*Ziphius cavirostris*), short-finned pilot whales (*Globicephala macrorhynchus*), Risso's dolphins (*Grampus griseus*), Arnoux's beaked whales (*Berardius arnuxii*), Antarctic minke whales (*Balaenoptera bonaerensis*) and endangered humpback whales (*Megaptera novaeangliae*) during vessel surveys. The permit is valid through March 31, 2019.

Permit No. 14856-03 authorizes Dr. Mate to take 66 species of cetaceans and 12 species of pinnipeds in U.S. and international waters worldwide for scientific research. The purposes of the research are to: (1) Identify migration routes; (2) identify specific feeding and breeding grounds; (3) characterize local movements and dive habits in both feeding and breeding grounds, and during migration; (4) examine the relationships between movements/dive habits and prey distribution, time of day, geographic location, or physical and biological oceanographic conditions; (5) characterize whale vocalizations; (6) characterize sound pressure levels to which whales are exposed; and (7) gather photo-identification and behavioral information. Researchers are authorized to conduct aerial and vessel surveys and a suite of research activities including: Observations, biopsy sampling, tagging,

and import, receive or export parts. The permit has been amended (No. 04) to increase the number of humpback whales that may be taken by Level B harassment during surveys from 1,000 to 2,000 animals annually. The permit expires December 31, 2018.

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*) (NEPA), a final determination has been made that the activity proposed for Permit No. 14809-02 is categorically excluded from the requirement to prepare an environmental assessment (EA) or environmental impact statement.

A supplemental EA analyzing the effects of the permitted activities on the human environment was prepared for Permit No. 14856-04 in compliance with NEPA. Based on the analyses in the EA, NMFS determined that issuance of the permit would not significantly impact the quality of the human environment and that preparation of an environmental impact statement was not required. That determination is documented in a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), signed on October 27, 2015.

As required by the ESA, issuance of the permits was based on a finding that each 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: January 6, 2016.

Julia Harrison,

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

[FR Doc. 2016-00455 Filed 1-12-16; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XE384

Endangered Species; File No. 19496

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

ACTION: Notice; receipt of application.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that Mariana Fuentes, Florida State University, 532 Hart Street, Tallahassee, FL 32301, has applied in due form for a permit to take loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*), Kemp's ridley (*Lepidochelys kempii*), green (*Chelonia mydas*), and hawksbill (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) sea

turtles for purposes of scientific research.

DATES: Written, telefaxed, or email comments must be received on or before February 12, 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 (APPS) home page, <https://apps.nmfs.noaa.gov>, and then selecting File No. 19496 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. 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: Arturo Herrera or Amy Hapeman, (301) 427-8401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The subject permit is requested under the authority of 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 applicant requests a five-year permit to conduct year-round field activities in the Florida Big Bend Region to take, by capture or disturbance during vessel surveys, sea turtles to identify important foraging and developmental habitats. Vessel transect surveys would occur separately from capture efforts. Up to 1,225 sea turtles would be disturbed annually during vessel surveys for counts and observation to identify relative presence, abundance, and habitat use of turtles. Up to 480 sea turtles annually captured by hand, dip net or strike net would have the following procedures performed before release: Measure; weigh; blood, scute, and biopsy sampling; temporary carapace marking; satellite tagging; flipper passive integrated transponder

tagging and/or photography/videography.

Dated: January 7, 2016.

Julia Harrison,

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

[FR Doc. 2016-00454 Filed 1-12-16; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Department of the Air Force

Notice of Intent To Grant an Exclusive Patent License

AGENCY: Department of the Air Force, Department of Defense.

ACTION: Notice of intent.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the provisions of part 404 of title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, which implements Public Law 96-517, as amended; the Department of the Air Force announces its intention to grant The Regents of the University of Michigan, a land-grant educational institution of the State of Michigan, having a place of business at 503 S. State St., Ann Arbor, MI 48109.

DATES: The Air Force intends to grant a license for the patent and pending applications unless a written objection is received within fifteen (15) calendar days from the date of publication of this Notice.

ADDRESSES: Written objection should be sent to: Air Force Materiel Command Law Office, AFMCLO/JAZ, 2240 B Street, Rm. 101, Wright-Patterson AFB, OH 45433-7109; Facsimile: (937) 255-3733.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Air Force Materiel Command Law Office, AFMCLO/JAZ, 2240 B Street, Rm. 101, Wright-Patterson AFB, OH 45433-7109; Facsimile: (937) 255-3733.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: An exclusive license in any right, title, and interest of the Air Force in: International Application No. PCT/US2014/059727, entitled, "APPARATUS AND METHODS FOR ENERGY EFFICIENT SEPARATIONS INCLUDING REFINING OF FUEL PRODUCTS," by Reams et al., and filed on October 8, 2014.

Henry Williams,

Acting Air Force Federal Register Liaison Officer, Civ, DAF.

[FR Doc. 2016-00492 Filed 1-12-16; 8:45 am]

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