

mammal stock in the wild by causing disruption of behavioral patterns, including, but not limited to, migration, breathing, nursing, breeding, feeding, or sheltering (Level B harassment).

Regulations governing the taking of harbor seals (*Phoca vitulina richardii*) and California sea lions (*Eumatopias jubatus*), by Level B harassment, incidental to MBNMS's commercial fireworks displays, were issued on June 14, 2017 (82 FR 27434) and remain in effect until June 28, 2022. A correction to the effective dates of the final rule was published on June 27, 2017 (82 FR 29010). For detailed information on the action, please refer to that document. The regulations include mitigation, monitoring, and reporting requirements for the incidental take of marine mammals during commercial fireworks displays within the Sanctuary.

Summary of Request

On October 18, 2016, NMFS received an adequate and complete request for regulations and subsequent LOA from MBNMS for the taking of small numbers of marine mammals incidental to commercial fireworks displays within the Sanctuary. NMFS has issued incidental take authorizations under section 101(a)(5)(A or D) of the MMPA to MBNMS for the specified activity since 2005. NMFS first issued an incidental harassment authorization (IHA) under section 101(a)(5)(D) of the MMPA to MBNMS on July 4, 2005 (70 FR 39235; July 7, 2005), and subsequently issued 5-year regulations governing the annual issuance of LOAs under section 101(a)(5)(A) of the MMPA (71 FR 40928; July 19, 2006). Upon expiration of those regulations, NMFS issued MBNMS an IHA (76 FR 29196; May 20, 2011), and subsequent 5-year regulations and LOA, which expire on June 28, 2017 (77 FR 31537; May 29, 2012).

Professional pyrotechnic devices used in fireworks displays can be grouped into three general categories: aerial shells (paper and cardboard spheres or cylinders ranging from 2–12 inch (in) (5–30 centimeter (cm)) in diameter and filled with incendiary materials), low-level comet and multi-shot devices similar to over-the-counter fireworks (e.g., roman candles), and ground-mounted set piece displays that are mostly static in nature. Each display is unique according to the type and number of shells, the pace of the show, the length of the show, the acoustic qualities of the display site, and even the weather and time of day. An average large display will last 20 minutes and include 700 aerial shells and 750 low-level effects. An average smaller display

lasts approximately seven minutes and includes 300 aerial shells and 550 low-level effects. The MBNMS anticipates permitting up to 10 fireworks events annually. Commercial fireworks displays produce noise that may result in Level B harassment of harbor seals and California sea lions that are hauled out near the fireworks displays. A maximum of 570 harbor seals and 3,983 California sea lions annually could be taken by Level B harassment with 2,850 harbor seals and 19,915 California sea lions taken over the 5-year effective period of the regulations. The authorized take will remain within the annual estimates analyzed in the final rule making.

Authorization

We have issued an LOA to MBNMS authorizing the take of marine mammals incidental to commercial fireworks displays, as described above. Take of marine mammals will be minimized through implementation of mitigation measures designed to reduce impacts on pinnipeds by establishing a sanctuary-wide seasonal prohibition to safeguard pinniped reproductive periods by prohibiting displays between March 1 and June 30 of any year when the primary reproductive season for pinnipeds occurs; establishing four conditional display areas and prohibit displays along the remaining 95 percent of sanctuary coastal areas; limiting displays to an average frequency equal to or less than one every 2 months in each area with a total maximum of 10 displays per year across all four areas; limiting fireworks displays to not exceed 30 minutes, with the exception of two longer displays per year across all four areas that will not exceed 1 hour; implementing a ramp-up period, wherein salutes are not allowed in the first five minutes of the display; and conducting post-show debris cleanups for up to two days whereby all debris from the event is removed). Additionally, the rule includes an adaptive management component that allows for timely modification of mitigation or monitoring measures based on new information, when appropriate. The MBNMS will submit reports as required.

Based on these findings and the information discussed in the preamble to the final rule, the activities described under this LOA will have a negligible impact on marine mammal stocks and will not have an unmitigable adverse impact on the availability of the affected marine mammal stock for subsistence uses.

Dated: June 29, 2017.

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–XF504

New England Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting; Correction

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

ACTION: Notice; correction.

SUMMARY: The New England Fishery Management Council (Council) is scheduling a public meeting of its Research Steering Committee to consider actions affecting New England fisheries in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ). Recommendations from this group will be brought to the full Council for formal consideration and action, if appropriate.

DATES: This meeting will be held on Wednesday, July 19, 2017 at 9 a.m.

ADDRESSES:

Meeting address: The meeting will be held at the Holiday Inn, 700 Myles Standish Boulevard, Taunton, MA 02780; phone: (508) 823–0430.

Council address: New England Fishery Management Council, 50 Water Street, Mill 2, Newburyport, MA 01950.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Thomas A. Nies, Executive Director, New England Fishery Management Council; telephone: (978) 465–0492.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The original noticed published in the **Federal Register** on June 29, 2017 (82 FR 29485). The notice stated that the meeting would begin at 9:30 a.m. This notice corrects the start time in the **DATES** section to begin at 9 a.m. All other information previously published remains the same.

Dated: June 30, 2017.

Tracey L. Thompson,

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

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