

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 the application(s) would be appropriate.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Malcolm Mohead or Erin Markin at (301) 427-8401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The subject permits are 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).

File No. 21198: Researchers with the USFWS propose to use existing captive populations of shortnose and Atlantic sturgeon to conduct research facilitating the development of new methods needed for achieving species recovery in facilities located in the Southeast Region of the USFWS. Research would include nutrition, physiology, nutrition, propagation, contaminants, genetics, fish health, cryopreservation, tagging, refugia, and collaborative research with others. Additional objectives would include collaborative research and public display at other satellite facilities on the permit. The permit would be valid for ten years from the date of issuance.

File No. 21434: Researchers at the Maryland Department of Natural Resources and cooperating researchers (e.g., University of Maryland and other collaborators) propose objectives for conducting research and public display on captive Atlantic sturgeon. Researchers propose developing reliable culture techniques, minimizing or eliminating the use of wild fish and impacts on non-target species. Research projects are to include fish physiology, fish culture, behavioral studies, tagging, fish nutrition, propagation methods, genetics, cryopreservation, refinement of anesthetization technology, and refugia as needed for management priorities. Additional objectives would include collaborative research and public display at other satellite facilities on the permit. The permit would be valid for ten years from the date of issuance.

Dated: December 5, 2017.

Julia Harrison,

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

[FR Doc. 2017-26493 Filed 12-7-17; 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: Alaska Crab Arbitration.

OMB Control Number: 0648-0516.

Form Number(s): None.

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

Number of Respondents: 2.

Average Hours Per Response: 6.

Burden Hours: 12.

Needs and Uses: This request is for extension of a current information collection.

The Crab Rationalization Program (CRP) allocates Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands (BSAI) crab resources among harvesters, processors, and coastal communities through a limited access system that balances the interests of these groups who depend on these fisheries.

The Crab Rationalization Program Arbitration System (CRPAS) is a series of steps that harvesters and processors can use to negotiate delivery and price contracts. The Arbitration System allows unaffiliated Class A individual fishing quota holders to initiate an arbitration proceeding in the event of a dispute to allow an independent third party to provide a review of harvester and processor negotiation positions and provide an independent and binding resolution to issues under dispute. To use the arbitration system, a harvester must commit deliveries to a processor and initiate a binding arbitration proceeding in advance of the season opening. The Arbitration System is designed to minimize antitrust risks for crab harvesters and processors and is intended to ensure that a reasonable price is paid for all landings.

Affected Public: Business or other for-profit organizations; individuals or households.

Frequency: Annually.

Respondent's Obligation: Required to retain or obtain benefits.

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 5, 2017.

Sarah Brabson,

NOAA PRA Clearance Officer.

[FR Doc. 2017-26468 Filed 12-7-17; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XF792

Endangered and Threatened Species; Initiation of a 5-Year Review for the Endangered Western Distinct Population Segment of Steller Sea Lion

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

ACTION: Notice of initiation of 5-year review; request for information.

SUMMARY: We, NMFS, announce our intent to conduct a 5-year review for the endangered western distinct population segment (DPS) of Steller sea lion (*Eumetopias jubatus*) under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA). We are required by the ESA to conduct 5-year reviews to ensure that the listing classifications of species are accurate. The 5-year review must be based on the best scientific and commercial data available at the time of the review. We request submission of any such information on the Western DPS of Steller sea lion, particularly information on the status, threats, and recovery of the species that has become available since the final listing determination in May, 1997.

DATES: To allow us adequate time to conduct this review, we must receive your information no later than February 6, 2018. However, we will continue to accept new information about Steller sea lions at any time.

ADDRESSES: Submit your information or comments by including the FDMS

Docket Number NOAA–NMFS–2017–0137, by either of the following methods:

- *Federal e-Rulemaking Portal.* Go to www.regulations.gov / [!docketDetail;D=NOAA–NMFS–2017–0137](https://www.regulations.gov/docketDetail;D=NOAA-NMFS-2017-0137), click the “Comment Now!” icon, complete the required fields, and enter or attach your comments.
- *Mail:* Submit written information to Jon Kurland, Assistant Regional Administrator for Protected Resources, Alaska Region NMFS, Attn: Ellen Sebastian, P.O. Box 21668, Juneau, AK 99802–1668.

Instructions: We may not consider comments if they are sent by any other method, to any other address or individual, or received after the end of the specified period. All comments received are a part of the public record, and we will generally post for public viewing on www.regulations.gov without change. All personal identifying information (e.g., name, address, etc.), confidential business information, or otherwise sensitive or protected information submitted voluntarily by the sender is publicly accessible. We will accept anonymous comments (enter “N/A” in the required fields if you wish to remain anonymous). Attachments to electronic submissions will be accepted in Microsoft Word, Excel, or Adobe PDF file formats only.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Lisa Rotterman, 907–271–1692 or lisa.rotterman@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

The Steller sea lion was listed as threatened under the ESA by an emergency interim rule on April 5, 1990 (55 FR 12645). NMFS published a final rule to list the Steller sea lion as a threatened species under the ESA on November 26, 1990 (55 FR 49204). NMFS designated critical habitat for the Steller sea lion on August 27, 1993 (58 FR 45269). On May 5, 1997, based on demographic and genetic dissimilarities, NMFS identified two DPSs of Steller sea lions under the ESA: A western DPS (WDPS) and an eastern DPS (EDPS) (62 FR 24345). Due to persistent decline and lack of recovery, the WDPS, comprised of animals originating from breeding sites west of 144° W longitude, was listed as endangered (62 FR 24345, May 5, 1997), and the EDPS remained listed as threatened.

Section 4(c)(2)(A) of the ESA requires that we conduct a review of listed species at least once every five years. On the basis of such reviews under section 4(c)(2)(B), we determine whether a species should be removed from the List (delisted), or reclassified in status from endangered to threatened or from

threatened to endangered. Delisting a species must be supported by the best scientific and commercial data available and is considered only if such data substantiates that the species is neither endangered nor threatened for one or more of the following reasons: (1) The species is considered extinct; (2) the species is considered to be recovered; and/or (3) the original data available when the species was listed, or the interpretation of such data, were in error (see 50 CFR 424.11(d)). Reclassification also must be supported by the best scientific and commercial data available and is considered only after conducting a review of the species’ status in light of the listing factors provided in section 4(a)(1) of the ESA (see 50 CFR 424.11(c)). Any change in classification (delisting or reclassification) would require a rulemaking process. The ESA implementing regulations at 50 CFR 424.21 require that we publish a notice in the **Federal Register** announcing those species currently under active review. This notice announces our active review of the WDPS, which is currently listed as endangered.

Background information about this species, including their endangered listing, related critical habitat designation, recovery planning, and protective regulations, is available on the NMFS Alaska Region Web site at <https://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/>.

Determining if a Species Is Threatened or Endangered

Section 4(a)(1) of the ESA requires that we determine whether a species is endangered or threatened based on one or more of the five following factors: (1) The present or threatened destruction, modification, or curtailment of its habitat or range; (2) overutilization for commercial, recreational, scientific, or educational purposes; (3) disease or predation; (4) the inadequacy of existing regulatory mechanisms; or (5) other natural or manmade factors affecting its continued existence. Section 4(b) also requires that our determination be made solely on the basis of the best scientific and commercial data available after taking into account those efforts, if any, being made by any State or foreign nation to protect such species.

Application of the DPS Policy

The western DPS of Steller sea lion was listed as a DPS of a vertebrate taxon. In the application of the DPS Policy, we are responsible for determining whether species, subspecies, or DPSs of marine and anadromous species are threatened or endangered under the ESA. A DPS is defined in the February 7, 1996, Policy

Regarding the Recognition of Distinct Vertebrate Population Segments (61 FR 4722). For a population to be listed under the ESA as a DPS, three elements are considered: (1) The discreteness of the population segment in relation to the remainder of the species to which it belongs; (2) the significance of the population segment to the species to which it belongs; and (3) the population segment’s conservation status in relation to the Act’s standards for listing (i.e., is the population segment, when treated as if it were a species, endangered or threatened?). DPSs of vertebrate species, as well as subspecies of all listed species, may be proposed for separate reclassification or for removal from the List. As required by the DPS policy, we will apply the DPS policy during the 5-year review.

Public Solicitation of New Information

To ensure that the 5-year review is complete and based on the best available scientific and commercial information, we are soliciting relevant information. The 5-year review will consider the best scientific and commercial data that has become available since the listing determination. Categories of requested information include (1) species biology including population trends, distribution, abundance, demographics, population structure, ecology, behavior, and genetics; (2) habitat conditions including amount, distribution, and suitability; (3) conservation measures that benefit the species, including monitoring data demonstrating the effectiveness of such measures in addressing identified limiting factors or threats; (4) data concerning status and trends of identified threats; (5) information that may affect determinations regarding the composition of the WDPS; and (6) other new information.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*

Dated: December 4, 2017.

Angela Somma,

Chief, Endangered Species Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 2017–26435 Filed 12–7–17; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–22–P

COMMITTEE FOR PURCHASE FROM PEOPLE WHO ARE BLIND OR SEVERELY DISABLED

Procurement List; Deletions

AGENCY: Committee for Purchase From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled.