DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
RIN 0648–XF592
Marine Mammals; File No. 21158–01
AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.
ACTION: Notice; issuance of permit amendment.
SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that a major amendment to Permit No. 21158 has been issued to Robert Garrott, Ph.D., Montana State University, 310 Lewis Hall, Bozeman, MT 59717.
ADDRESSES: The permit amendment 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: Sara Young or Carrie Hubard, (301) 427–8401.
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On November 8, 2017, a notice was published in the Federal Register (82 FR 51822) that a request for an amendment Permit No. 21158 to conduct research on Weddell seals had been submitted by the above-named applicant. The requested permit amendment 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 amendment authorizes an increase in takes of seal pups authorized to be flipper tagged from a total of 675 to a total take of 1,000 pups. This field season the research team has observed an abnormally high number of pups and current take numbers are not adequate to meet the stated scientific goals of tagging all pups produced in the Erebus Bay colonies each year. This increase is only for the 2017–18 field season and not for the duration of the permit. At the end of the public comment period, we will assess all substantive comments received and if warranted, further amend the permit in response to those comments.
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.
Julia Harrison,
Chief, Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.

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).
Title: Pacific Halibut Fisheries: Charter Permits.
OMB Control Number: 0648–0592.
Form Number(s): None.
Type of Request: Regular (revision and extension of a currently approved information collection).
Number of Respondents: 236.
Average Hours per Response: 2 hours for Application for Transfer of Charter Halibut Permit; 0.5 hours for Application for Military Charter Permit; 2 hours for Application for Transfer between IFQ and GAF is denied by NMFS.
Burden Hours: 559.
Needs and Uses: This request is for revision and extension of a currently approved information collection.
The Alaska Pacific Halibut Charter Program established Federal Charter Halibut Permits (CHPs) for operators in the charter halibut fishery in IPHC regulatory Areas 2C (Southeast Alaska) and 3A (Central Gulf of Alaska). Since February 1, 2011, all vessel operators in Areas 2C and 3A with charter anglers onboard catching and retaining Pacific halibut must have a valid CHP onboard during every charter vessel fishing trip. CHPs must be endorsed with the appropriate regulatory area and number of anglers.
The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) implemented this program based on recommendations by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council to meet allocation objectives in the charter halibut fishery. This program provides stability in the fishery by limiting the number of charter vessels that may participate in Areas 2C and 3A and decreasing the overall number of available CHPs over time. The program goals are to increase the value of the resource, limit boats to qualified active participants in the guided sport halibut sector, and enhance economic stability in rural coastal communities.
An appeal letter was inadvertently removed from this collection previously, now reinstated.
Affected Public: Business or other for-profit organizations; individuals and households.
Frequency: 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.
Sarah Brabson,
NOAA PRA Clearance Officer.