

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

RIN 0648–XR017

Marine Mammals and Endangered Species; File No. 22435

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

ACTION: Notice; receipt of application.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the Northwest Fisheries Science Center, Marine Forensic Laboratory, 2725 Montlake Blvd. East, Seattle, WA 98112 (Responsible Party: Kevin Werner, Ph.D.), has applied in due form for a permit to receive, import, and export marine mammal and protected species parts for scientific research.

DATES: Written, telefaxed, or email comments must be received on or before August 26, 2019.

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. 22435 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. 22435 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: Jennifer Skidmore or Shasta McClenahan, (301) 427–8401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The subject permit is requested under the authority of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended (MMPA; 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.*), the regulations governing the taking, importing, and exporting of endangered and threatened species (50 CFR parts 222–226), and the Fur Seal Act of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1151 *et seq.*).

The applicant proposes to receive, import, and export samples from up to 100 individual animals from each species of all cetaceans, pinnipeds (excluding walrus), sea turtles (in water), coral, and individual species of fish and abalone listed under the ESA including: Black and white abalone, Pacific and Atlantic salmonids, sawfish, sturgeon, sharks, grouper, rockfish, guitarfish, and totoaba. Receipt, import, and export is requested worldwide. Sources of samples may include animal strandings in foreign countries, foreign and domestic subsistence harvests, captive animals, other authorized persons or collections, incidentally bycaught animals, transfers from law enforcement, and marine mammals that died incidental to commercial fishing operations in the U.S. and foreign countries, where such take is legal. Samples would be archived at the Marine Forensics Laboratories in either Charleston or Seattle and would be used for research, supporting law enforcement actions, and outreach and education. No live takes from the wild would be authorized. The requested duration of the permit is 5 years.

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), an initial determination has been made that the activity proposed is categorically excluded from the requirement to prepare an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement.

Concurrent with the publication of this notice in the **Federal Register**, NMFS is forwarding copies of the application to the Marine Mammal Commission and its Committee of Scientific Advisors.

Dated: July 23, 2019.

Julia Marie Harrison,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

RIN 0648–XG909

Takes of Marine Mammals Incidental to Specified Activities; Taking Marine Mammals Incidental to Site Characterization Surveys of Lease Areas OCS–A 0486, OCS–A 0487, and OCS–A 0500

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

ACTION: Notice; proposed incidental harassment authorization; request for comments.

SUMMARY: NMFS has received an application from Orsted Wind Power LLC (Orsted) for an Incidental Harassment Authorization (IHA) to take marine mammals, by harassment, incidental to high-resolution geophysical (HRG) survey investigations associated with marine site characterization activities off the coast of Massachusetts and Rhode Island in the areas of Commercial Lease of Submerged Lands for Renewable Energy Development on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) currently being leased by the Applicant’s affiliates Deepwater Wind New England, LLC and Bay State Wind LLC, respectively. These are identified as OCS–A 0486, OCS–A 0487, and OCS–A 0500 (collectively referred to as the Lease Areas). Orsted is also proposing to conduct marine site characterization surveys along one or more export cable route corridors (ECRs) originating from the Lease Areas and landing along the shoreline at locations from New York to Massachusetts, between Raritan Bay (part of the New York Bight) to Falmouth, Massachusetts (see Figure 1). Pursuant to the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA), NMFS is requesting comments on its proposal to issue an IHA to Orsted to incidentally take, by Level B harassment only, small numbers of marine mammals during the specified activities. NMFS will consider public comments prior to making any final decision on the issuance of the requested MMPA authorizations and agency responses will be summarized in the final notice of our decision.

DATES: Comments and information must be received no later than August 26, 2019.

ADDRESSES: Comments should be addressed to Jolie Harrison, Chief, Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, National