

two new two-lane tunnels, expansion of the existing portal islands, and full replacement of the existing North and South bridge-trestles. An estimated 6,746 piles would be installed and 3,856 piles would be removed over 5 years. Pile installation and removal activities would take place for approximately 312 days per year based on a 6-day work week. Bottlenose dolphins (*Tursiops spp.*), humpback whales (*Megaptera novaeangliae*), harbor porpoises (*Phocoena phocoena*), harbor seals (*Phoca vitulina*), and gray seals (*Halichoerus grypus*) have been observed in the area.

#### Information Solicited

Interested persons may submit information, suggestions, and comments concerning the HRCF's request (see **ADDRESSES**). NMFS will consider all information, suggestions, and comments related to the request during the development of proposed regulations governing the incidental taking of marine mammals by the HRCF, if appropriate.

Dated: October 2, 2020.

**Donna S. Wieting,**

Director, Office of Protected Resources,  
National Marine Fisheries Service.

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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 06489-XA531]

#### Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

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

**ACTION:** Notice of a public meeting.

**SUMMARY:** The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (Council) will hold a 4-day webinar meeting to consider actions affecting the Gulf of Mexico fisheries in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ).

**DATES:** The webinar will convene Monday, October 26 through Thursday, October 29, 2020, from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. EDT.

**ADDRESSES:** The meeting will take place via webinar; you may register for the meeting at [www.gulfcouncil.org](http://www.gulfcouncil.org).

Council address: Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, 4107 W. Spruce Street, Suite 200, Tampa, FL 33607; telephone: (813) 348-1630.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Dr. Carrie Simmons, Executive Director, Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council; telephone: (813) 348-1630.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### Agenda

*Monday, October 26, 2020; 9 a.m.–4 p.m.*

The meeting will begin in FULL COUNCIL open to the public to review and adopt the October 2020–August 2021 Council Committee Roster.

At approximately 9:15 a.m. the Data Collection Committee will review potential regulatory changes from Commercial Electronic Logbook Program Implementation; and, receive an update on Southeast For-hire Electronic Reporting (SEFHIER) Program. The Gulf SEDAR Committee will receive an update on Operational Assessment Process and Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) Recommendations; review Interim Analyses—Discussion on Timing and Use for Management; and, receive the Steering Committee report from the October 16, 2020 meeting. The Law Enforcement Committee will receive a meeting summary from the Law Enforcement Technical Committee meeting in March 2020.

The Sustainable Fisheries Committee will finalize recommendations on Executive Order 13921 from Public Comments and from the Council, receive a summary report from the Joint Section 102 Workgroup, and discuss Allocation Review Procedures. The Administrative/Budget Committee will review expenditures for No-Cost Extension Request (FY2014–2019) and 2020 Expenditures. The Committee will also review and discuss Scopes of Work (FY 2014–2019) Activities.

*Tuesday, October 27, 2020; 9 a.m.–4 p.m.*

The Reef Fish Committee will begin with reviewing Reef Fish Landings, Final Action: Framework Action to Adjust State Recreation Red Snapper Catch Limits, Public Hearing Draft Amendment 53: Red Grouper Catch Limits and Sector Allocations and Draft Framework Action: Modification of the Gulf of Mexico Lane Snapper Annual Catch Limit.

The Committee will also review Gray Triggerfish Interim Analysis, Public Hearing Draft Amendment 36B: Modifications to Commercial Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) Programs, and any remaining Reef Fish Advisory Panel recommendations.

*The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council and National*

*Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) will hold an informal Question and Answer session immediately following the Reef Fish Committee.*

*Wednesday, October 28, 2020; 9 a.m.–4:15 p.m.*

The Mackerel Committee will receive an update on Coastal Migratory Pelagics Landings, review SEDAR 38 Update: Gulf of Mexico King Mackerel Stock Assessment and receive a presentation on the Gulf of Mexico Migratory Group Cobia Draft Options.

Full Council will reconvene mid-morning (10:45 a.m.) with a Call to Order, Announcements, and Introductions; Adoption of Agenda and Approval of Minutes. The Council will receive presentations on 2019 Report to Congress on Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing and a presentation on Deepwater Horizon Open Ocean Fish Restoration. Following lunch, the Council will hold public comment testimony beginning at approximately 1 p.m. until 3:30 p.m. for Comments on Executive Order 13921, Final Action: Framework Action to Adjust State Recreational Red Snapper Catch Limits, and open testimony on other fishery issues or concerns. Public comment may begin earlier than 1 p.m. EDT but will not conclude before that time. Persons wishing to give public testimony must follow the instructions on the Council website before the start of the public comment period at 1 p.m. EDT.

Following public comment, the Council will receive the Data Collection committee report.

*Thursday, October 29, 2020; 9 a.m.–4 p.m.*

The Council will continue to receive committee reports from Administrative/Budget, Gulf SEDAR, Sustainable Fisheries, Mackerel, Shrimp, and Reef Fish Committees. The Council will receive updates from the following supporting agencies: Mississippi Law Enforcement Efforts; South Atlantic Fishery Management Council; NOAA Office of Law Enforcement (OLE); Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission; U.S. Coast Guard; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; and Department of State.

The Council will discuss any Other Business items.

#### —Meeting Adjourns

The meeting will be broadcast via webinar. You may register for the webinar by visiting [www.gulfcouncil.org](http://www.gulfcouncil.org) and clicking on the Council meeting on the calendar.

The timing and order in which agenda items are addressed may change as

required to effectively address the issue, and the latest version along with other meeting materials will be posted on the website as they become available.

Although other non-emergency issues not contained in this agenda may come before this group for discussion, in accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act), those issues may not be the subject of formal action during these meeting. Actions will be restricted to those issues specifically listed in this notice and any issues arising after publication of this notice that require emergency action under Section 305(c) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, provided that the public has been notified of the Council's intent to take final action to address the emergency.

**Authority:** 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: October 2, 2020.

**Diane M. DeJames-Daly,**

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

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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648-XA522]

#### Takes of Marine Mammals Incidental To Specified Activities; Taking Marine Mammals Incidental to Seabird Research Activities in Central California

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

**ACTION:** Notice; issuance of an incidental harassment authorization.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the regulations implementing the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) as amended, notification is hereby given that NMFS has issued an incidental harassment authorization (IHA) to the Point Blue Conservation Science (Point Blue) to incidentally harass, by Level B harassment only, marine mammals during seabird research activities in central California.

**DATES:** This Authorization is effective from October 1, 2020 through September 30, 2021.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Amy Fowler, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, (301) 427-8401. Electronic copies of the original application and supporting documents

(including NMFS **Federal Register** notices of the original proposed and final authorizations, and the previous IHA), as well as a list of the references cited in this document, may be obtained online at: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/permit/incidental-take-authorizations-under-marine-mammal-protection-act>. In case of problems accessing these documents, please call the contact listed above.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### Background

The MMPA prohibits the “take” of marine mammals, with certain exceptions. Sections 101(a)(5)(A) and (D) of the MMPA (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*) direct the Secretary of Commerce (as delegated to NMFS) to allow, upon request, the incidental, but not intentional, taking of small numbers of marine mammals by U.S. citizens who engage in a specified activity (other than commercial fishing) within a specified geographical region if certain findings are made and either regulations are issued or, if the taking is limited to harassment, a notice of a proposed incidental take authorization may be provided to the public for review.

Authorization for incidental takings shall be granted if NMFS finds that the taking will have a negligible impact on the species or stock(s) and will not have an unmitigable adverse impact on the availability of the species or stock(s) for taking for subsistence uses (where relevant). Further, NMFS must prescribe the permissible methods of taking and other “means of effecting the least practicable adverse impact” on the affected species or stocks and their habitat, paying particular attention to rookeries, mating grounds, and areas of similar significance, and on the availability of such species or stocks for taking for certain subsistence uses (referred to in shorthand as “mitigation”); and requirements pertaining to the mitigation, monitoring and reporting of such takings are set forth.

##### History of Request

On January 4, 2018, NMFS received a request from Point Blue for an IHA to take marine mammals incidental to seabird and marine mammal research monitoring taking place at three locations in central California. Point Blue's request was for take of California sea lions (*Zalophus californianus*), Pacific harbor seals (*Phoca vitulina*), northern elephant seals (*Mirounga angustirostris*), and Steller sea lions (*Eumetopias jubatus*) by Level B harassment only. NMFS published a notice of a proposed IHA and request for

comments in the **Federal Register** on May 7, 2018 (83 FR 20045). We subsequently published the final notice of our issuance of the IHA on July 5, 2018 (83 FR 31372), making the IHA valid for July 7, 2018 through July 6, 2019.

On September 17, 2019, NMFS received an application from Point Blue requesting a letter of authorization (LOA) for take of marine mammals incidental to seabird research activities in central California over the course of five years. We determined the application was adequate and complete on November 26, 2019 and published a notice of receipt of application in the **Federal Register** on December 4, 2019 (84 FR 66379). On June 17, 2020, NMFS received a request from Point Blue for an IHA to take marine mammals incidental to seabird research and monitoring in central California. Point Blue's application was determined to be adequate and complete on August 6, 2020. This IHA is effective for a period of one year from the date of issuance (*i.e.*, October 1, 2020 to September 30, 2021), with the LOA expected to be effective from January 1, 2021 to December 31, 2025.

Point Blue's planned activities are identical to those analyzed in the 2018 IHA, as are the mitigation, monitoring, and reporting requirements described in detail in the **Federal Register** notice of issuance of the 2018 IHA (83 FR 31372; July 5, 2018). The authorized take numbers for Steller sea lions have increased slightly, while the authorized take numbers for California sea lions, harbor seals, and northern elephant seals are identical to those analyzed in the 2018 IHA. Please see the *Estimated Take* section of this notice for more information.

##### Description of the Activity and Anticipated Impacts

Point Blue plans to monitor and census seabird populations, observe seabird nesting habitat, restore nesting burrows, and resupply a field station annually in central California. The planned activities occur on Southeast Farallon Island (SEFI), Año Nuevo Island (ANO), and Point Reyes National Seashore (PRNS). Point Blue, along with partners Oikonos Ecosystem Knowledge and PRNS, have been conducting seabird research activities at these locations for over 30 years. This research is conducted under cooperative agreements with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) in consultation with the Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary. Presence of researchers has the potential to disturb pinnipeds hauled out at SEFI,