National Marine Fisheries Service.

Donna S. Wieting,
marine-mammal-protection/incidental-
www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/
https://
can be found at
requirements are incorporated. The IHA
mitigation, monitoring, and reporting
provided the previously described
incidental to modification and
Navy for the taking of marine mammals
NMFS has issued a renewal IHA to the
Authorization

As a result of these determinations,
NMFS has issued a renewal IHA to the
Navy for the taking of marine mammals
 incidental to modification and
expansion of Portsmouth Naval
Shipyard Dry Dock 1 from the date of
issuance through February 27, 2022,
provided the previously described
mitigation, monitoring, and reporting
requirements are incorporated. The IHA
can be found at https://
www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/
marine-mammal-protection/incidental-
take-authorizations-construction-
activities.

Dated: March 12, 2021.
Donna S. Wieting,
Director, Office of Protected Resources,
National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 2021–05538 Filed 3–16–21; 8:45 am]
BILLING CODE 3510–22–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648–XA945]
North Pacific Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice of webconference.

SUMMARY: The North Pacific Fishery Management Council (NPFMC) Enforcement Committee will meet March 31, 2021.

DATES: The meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 31, 2021 from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m., Alaska time.

ADDRESS: The meeting will be a webconference. Join online through the link at https://meetings.npfmc.org/
Meeting/Details/1965.


Instructions for attending the meeting are given under SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION, below.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jon McCracken, Council staff; phone: (907) 271–2809 and email: jon.mccracken@noaa.gov. For technical support please contact administrative Council staff, email: npfmc.admin@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Agenda

Wednesday, March 31, 2021

The Enforcement Committee will review Council agenda item D3 RQE funding mechanism discussion paper. The paper examines a mechanism for the RQE to fund the purchase of halibut quota share be selling halibut stamps to charter operators. The agenda is subject to change, and the latest version will be posted at https://meetings.npfmc.org/
Meeting/Details/1965 prior to the meeting, along with meeting materials.

Connection Information

You can attend the meeting online using a computer, tablet, or smart phone; or by phone only. Connection information will be posted online at: https://meetings.npfmc.org/Meeting/Details/1965.

Public Comment

Public comment letters will be accepted and should be submitted electronically to https://
February 12, 2021, to conduct fishing activities that the regulations would otherwise restrict. The EFP would authorize one vessel to conduct larval sampling in Lobster Conservation Management Area 3. A map of this area is available at: https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/map/lobster-management-areas.

The study would provide information on the spatial and temporal distribution and abundance of early and late stage American lobster larvae and their likely zooplankton prey to investigate factors affecting recruitment in the Gulf of Maine and Georges Bank stock area.

Funding for this research has been awarded under a National Sea Grant Lobster Initiative grant (NA20OAR4170505). For this project, AOLA is requesting exemptions from the following Federal lobster regulations:

1. Lobster gear prohibitions in 50 CFR 697.7(c)(1)(xxii) to allow for the use of multiple gear types capable of catching lobsters;
2. Lobster possession restrictions in §697.17(a) to allow the harvest of lobster above the non-trap limit; and
3. Lobster possession restrictions in §697.20(a) to allow for the collection of larval lobsters below the minimum size.

If the EFP is approved, this study would hire one federally-permitted lobster vessel to conduct a single day of lobster larval sampling on 14 multi-day (5–10 day) commercial fishing trips, spanning from the first week in June through the last week in September. When sampling, the vessel crew would conduct three replicate neuston tows for lobster larvae and record physical parameters. Samples from the nets will be preserved in ethanol, bottled, landed, and mailed to the principal investigator. Legal lobsters from the commercial portion of the trip will be landed and sold.

If approved, AOLA may request minor modifications and extensions to the EFP throughout the study period. EFP modifications and extensions may be granted without further notice if they are deemed essential to facilitate completion of the proposed research and have minimal impacts that do not change the scope or impact of the initially approved EFP request. Any fishing activity conducted outside the scope of the exempted fishing activity would be prohibited.

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

Dated: March 12, 2021.

Jennifer M. Wallace,
Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 2021–05510 Filed 3–16–21; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–22–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648–XA903]

Takes of Marine Mammals Incidental to Specified Activities; Taking Marine Mammals Incidental to the Parallel Thimble Shoal Tunnel Project in Virginia Beach, Virginia

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

ACTION: Notice; issuance of Renewal incidental harassment authorization (IHA).

SUMMARY: In accordance with the regulations implementing the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA), as amended, notification is hereby given that NMFS has issued a Renewal incidental harassment authorization (IHA) to the Chesapeake Tunnel Joint Venture (CTJV) to incidentally harass marine mammals incidental to the Parallel Thimble Shoal Tunnel Project (PTST) in Virginia Beach, Virginia.

DATES: This Renewal IHA is valid from March 10, 2021, through March 9, 2022.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ben Laws, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, (301) 427–8401. Electronic copies of the original application, Renewal request, 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: www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/marine-mammal-protection/incidental-take-authorizations-construction-activities. In case of problems accessing these documents, please call the contact listed above.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The Marine Mammal Protection Act (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, an incidental harassment authorization is issued.

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 here as “mitigation measures”). Monitoring and reporting of such takings are also required. The meaning of key terms such as “take,” “harassment,” and “negligible impact” can be found in section 3 of the MMPA (16 U.S.C. 1362) and the agency’s regulations at 50 CFR 216.103.

NMFS’ regulations implementing the MMPA at 50 CFR 216.107(e) indicate that IHAs may be renewed for additional periods of time not to exceed one year for each reauthorization. In the notice of proposed IHA for the initial authorization, NMFS described the circumstances under which we would consider issuing a Renewal for this activity, and requested public comment on a potential Renewal under those circumstances. Specifically, on a case-by-case basis, NMFS may issue a one-time, one-year Renewal IHA following notice to the public providing an additional 15 days for public comments when (1) up to another year of identical, or nearly identical, activities as described in the Description of the Specified Activities and Anticipated Impacts section of this notice is planned or (2) the activities as described in the Description of the Specified Activities and Anticipated Impacts section of this notice would not be completed by the time the initial IHA expires and a Renewal would allow for completion of the activities beyond that described in the DATES section of the notice of issuance of the initial IHA, provided all of the following conditions are met:

1. A request for renewal is received no later than 60 days prior to the current Renewal IHA effective date (recognizing that the Renewal IHA expiration date

would be prohibited.

Any modifications and extensions may be granted without further notice if they are deemed essential to facilitate completion of the proposed research and have minimal impacts that do not change the scope or impact of the initially approved EFP request. Any fishing activity conducted outside the scope of the exempted fishing activity would be prohibited.

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