Special Accommodations

These meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aid should be directed to Shelley Spedden, (302) 526–5251, at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

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

Dated: June 24, 2026.

Rey Israel Marquez,

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

[FR Doc. 2026–12988 Filed 6–26–26; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648–XF833]

Taking and Importing Marine Mammals; Taking Marine Mammals Incidental to Geophysical Surveys Related to Oil and Gas Activities in the Gulf of America

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

ACTION: Notice; issuance of letters of authorization.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA), as amended, its implementing regulations, and NMFS' MMPA regulations for taking marine mammals incidental to geophysical surveys related to oil and gas activities in the Gulf of America (GOA), notification is hereby given that NMFS has issued three separate Letters of Authorization (LOAs) to TGS, for the take of marine mammals incidental to geophysical survey activity in the GOA.

DATES: One LOA issued to TGS is effective from August 15, 2026, through August 15, 2027. The other two LOAs issued to TGS are effective from September 1, 2026, through September 1, 2027.

ADDRESSES: The LOAs, LOA requests, and supporting documentation are available online at: *https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/action/incidental-take-authorization-oil-and-gas-industry-geophysical-survey.* In case of problems accessing these documents, please call the contact listed below (see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jenna Harlacher, Office of Protected Resources (OPR), NMFS, (301) 427–8401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Sections 101(a)(5)(A) and (D) of the MMPA (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*) direct the Secretary of Commerce 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 authorization is provided to the public for review.

An authorization for incidental takings shall be granted if NMFS finds that the taking will have a negligible impact on the species or stock(s), will not have an unmitigable adverse impact on the availability of the species or stock(s) for subsistence uses (where relevant), and if the permissible methods of taking and requirements pertaining to the mitigation, monitoring and reporting of such takings are set forth. NMFS has defined ''negligible impact'' in 50 CFR 216.103 as an impact resulting from the specified activity that cannot be reasonably expected to, and is not reasonably likely to, adversely affect the species or stock through effects on annual rates of recruitment or survival.

Except with respect to certain activities not pertinent here, the MMPA defines ''harassment'' as: any act of pursuit, torment, or annoyance which (i) has the potential to injure a marine mammal or marine mammal stock in the wild (Level A harassment); or (ii) has the potential to disturb a marine mammal or marine mammal stock in the wild by causing disruption of behavioral patterns, including, but not limited to, migration, breathing, nursing, breeding, feeding, or sheltering (Level B harassment).

On January 19, 2021, we issued a final rule with regulations to govern the unintentional taking of marine mammals incidental to geophysical survey activities conducted by oil and gas industry operators, and those persons authorized to conduct activities on their behalf (collectively ''industry operators''), in U.S. waters of the GOA [1] over the course of 5 years (86 FR 5322, January 19, 2021). The rule was based on our findings that the total taking from the specified activities over the 5-year period will have a negligible impact on the affected species or stock(s) of marine mammals and will not have an unmitigable adverse impact on the availability of those species or stocks for subsistence uses, and became effective on April 19, 2021.

The regulations at 50 CFR 217.180 allow for the issuance of LOAs to industry operators for the incidental take of marine mammals during geophysical survey activities and prescribe the permissible methods of taking and other means of effecting the least practicable adverse impact on marine mammal species or stocks and their habitat (often referred to as mitigation), as well as requirements pertaining to the monitoring and reporting of such taking. Under 50 CFR 217.186(e), issuance of an LOA shall be based on a determination that the level of taking will be consistent with the findings made for the total taking allowable under these regulations and a determination that the amount of take authorized under the LOA is of no more than small numbers.

NMFS subsequently discovered that the 2021 rule was based on erroneous take estimates. We conducted another rulemaking using correct take estimates and other newly available and pertinent information relevant to the analyses supporting some of the findings in the 2021 final rule and the taking allowable under the regulations. We issued a final rule in April 2024, effective May 24, 2024 (89 FR 31488, April 24, 2024).

On August 28, 2025, NMFS' OPR received a request from NMFS' Office of Policy for reimplementation of the current Incidental Take Regulation (ITR) to avoid a lapse in ITRs offering incidental take coverage for GOA geophysical survey activities. On October 20, 2025, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (the original petitioner for the current ITRs) submitted a request to be included in the process as a co-petitioner. In response to these requests, NMFS issued a new final rule, effective April 20, 2026, through April 19, 2031 (91 FR 20784, April 17, 2026).

The reimplementation of the regulations continues the established framework for authorization of incidental take through LOAs. The final rule made no changes to the specified activities or the specified geographical region in which those activities would be conducted, and there are no changes to the associated mitigation, monitoring, and reporting requirements.

Summary of Requests and Analysis

Amendment 3

TGS plans to conduct a three-dimensional (3D) ocean-bottom node (OBN) survey over 200 lease blocks in the Viosca Knoll, Mississippi Canyon, De Soto Canyon, and Atwater Valley protraction areas, with water depths ranging from approximately 50 to 2,100

meters (m). See section F of the LOA application for a map of the area.

TGS plans to operate two independent source vessels. One source vessel will use three 5,200-cubic-inch (in^3) conventional airgun sources. The other source vessel plans to use a low-frequency airgun source known as Gemini (also referred to as a dual barbell source). Gemini airgun arrays will fire using the ''Seismic Apparition'' method, with a single-source vessel towing six sources (100 m separation), firing within 120 milliseconds with a predetermined dither to each source; no sources will fire simultaneously at any time. Alternatively, Gemini airgun arrays will fire using ''flip-flap-flop-flup'' method with 2 to 3 seconds dither applied to each source. Please see TGS' application for additional details.

The Gemini was not included in the acoustic exposure modeling developed in support of the rule. However, the Gemini was described and evaluated in support of a previous LOA, and we rely on that analysis here (88 FR 72739, October 23, 2023). For additional details regarding sources, see section C of the LOA application. Based on this information we have determined there will be no effects of magnitude or intensity different from those evaluated in support of the rule. NMFS therefore expects that use of modeling results supporting the final rule relating to use of airgun arrays is expected to be conservative as a proxy for use in evaluating potential impacts of use of the Gemini.

Consistent with the preamble to the 2026 final rule, the survey effort proposed by TGS in its LOA request was used to develop LOA-specific take estimates based on the acoustic exposure modeling results described in the preamble (91 FR 20784, April 17, 2026). In order to generate the appropriate take number for authorization, the following information was considered: (1) survey type; (2) location (by modeling zone [2]); (3) number of days; (4) source; and (5) month.[3] To determine the most appropriate proxy array from the exposure modeling, the directionally dependent source level in a plane parallel to the sea surface was compared to the three airgun array sources that were originally modeled, including the 4,130-, 5,110-, and 8,000-in^3 arrays. Out of these three proxies, the source that had the smallest relative error (arithmetic mean difference taken over the azimuthal or vessel bearing angle) was chosen as the most representative proxy. In this case, because TGS plans use independent source vessels with different sources, we look at these independently. For survey activity using a 5,200-in^3 airgun array source, the 5,110-in^3 had the lowest mean error (0.7 dB) and was the airgun array proxy that was selected. For the Gemini source use (a single 8,000-in^3 array), surface-affected waveforms were modeled by TGS using Nucleus+. To approximate the acoustic energy from six elements, the sound exposure level (SEL) for each frequency and aspect was adjusted by a factor of $10*\log_{10}(N)$, where N in this case is 6. The resulting spectra were used in the comparison tool as described above. The results showed that the most comparable source was the 4,130-in^3 array. The Nucleus+ results indicate that the horizontal surface-affected SEL source level for a single 8,000-in^3 array is approximately 218.2 dB, while the additional $10*\log_{10}(6)$ increases this to approximately 226 dB. Notably, the corresponding source level for the 4,130-in^3 source is approximately 232 dB. Thus, the total acoustic energy from six 8,000-in^3 Gemini sources remains lower than the conventional 4,130-in^3 array. The acoustic exposure modeling performed in support of the rule provides 24-hour exposure estimates for each species, specific to each modeled source and survey type in each zone and month.

No OBN surveys were included in the modeled survey types, and use of existing proxies (*i.e.,* two-dimensional (2D), 3D narrow azimuth (NAZ), 3D wide azimuth (WAZ), Coil) is generally conservative for use in evaluation of 3D OBN survey effort, largely due to the greater area covered by the modeled proxies. Summary descriptions of these modeled survey geometries are available in the preamble to the proposed rule (91 FR 9014, 9018, February 24, 2026). Coil was selected as the best available proxy survey type in this case because the spatial coverage of the planned survey is most similar to the coil survey pattern. Among the different parameters of the modeled survey patterns (*e.g.,* area covered, line spacing, number of sources, shot interval, total simulated pulses), NMFS considers area covered per day to be most influential on daily modeled exposures exceeding Level B harassment criteria. Although TGS is not proposing to perform a survey using the coil geometry, the coil proxy is most representative of the effort planned by TGS in terms of predicted Level B harassment exposures.

The survey will take place over approximately 174 days with 135 days of sound source operation, including 100 days in zone 5 (consisting of 52 days of Gemini use and 48 days of conventional source use) and 35 days of Gemini use in zone 7. The monthly distribution of survey days is not known in advance, though we assume that the planned 135 days of source operation would occur contiguously. Take estimates for each species are based on the time period that produces the greatest value.

For the Rice's whale, recent survey data, sightings, and acoustic data support Rice's whale occurrence in waters throughout the GOM between approximately 100 and 400 m depth along the continental shelf break, and associated habitat-based density modeling has identified similar habitat (*i.e.,* approximately 100 to 400 m water depths along the continental shelf break) as being Rice's whale habitat (Garrison *et al.,* 2023; Soldevilla *et al.,* 2022, 2024). NMFS' 2026 proposed rule provided detailed discussion regarding Rice's whale habitat (*e.g.,* 91 FR 9014, 9026, February 24, 2026).

TGS' planned activities will overlap this depth range, with approximately 10.5 percent of the area expected to be ensonified by the survey above root-mean-squared pressure received levels (RMS SPL) of 160 decibel (dB) (referenced to 1 micropascal (re 1 µPa)) overlapping the 100- to 400-m isobaths. Therefore, there is some reasonable potential for take of Rice's whale to occur in association with this survey and we are authorizing a group size of two Rice's whale takes.

APEX 2

TGS plans to conduct a 3D OBN survey over 436 lease blocks in the East Breaks, Alaminos Canyon, Keathley Canyon, and Garden Banks areas, with water depths ranging from approximately 50 to 2,500 m. See section F of the LOA application for a map of the area.

TGS plans to use a low-frequency airgun source known as Gemini (also referred to as a dual barbell source). Gemini airgun arrays will fire using the ''Seismic Apparition'' method, with a single-source vessel towing six sources (100 m separation), firing within 120 milliseconds with a predetermined dither to each source; no sources will fire simultaneously at any time. Alternatively, Gemini airgun arrays will fire using ''flip-flap-flop-flup'' method with 2 to 3 seconds dither applied to each source. Please see TGS' application for additional details.

The Gemini was not included in the acoustic exposure modeling developed in support of the rule. However, the Gemini was described and evaluated in support of a previous LOA and we rely on that analysis here (88 FR 72739, October 23, 2023). For additional details regarding sources, see section C of the

LOA application. Based on this information we have determined there will be no effects of magnitude or intensity different from those evaluated in support of the rule. NMFS therefore expects that use of modeling results supporting the final rule relating to use of airgun arrays is expected to be conservative as a proxy for use in evaluating potential impacts of use of the Gemini.

Consistent with the preamble to the 2026 final rule, the survey effort proposed by TGS in its LOA request was used to develop LOA-specific take estimates based on the acoustic exposure modeling results described in the preamble (91 FR 20784, April 17, 2026). In order to generate the appropriate take number for authorization, the following information was considered: (1) survey type; (2) location (by modeling zone); (3) number of days; (4) source; and (5) month.[ii] To determine the most appropriate proxy array from the exposure modeling, the directionally dependent source level in a plane parallel to the sea surface was compared to the three airgun array sources which were originally modeled, including the 4,130-, 5,110-, and 8,000-in^3 arrays. Out of these three proxies, the source which had the smallest relative error (arithmetic mean difference taken over the azimuthal or vessel bearing angle) was chosen as the most representative proxy. For a single 8,000-in^3 Gemini source, surface affected waveforms were modeled by TGS using Nucleus+. To approximate the acoustic energy from six elements, the SEL for each frequency and aspect was adjusted by a factor of $10*\log_{10}(N)$, where N in this case is 6. The resulting spectra were used in the comparison tool. The results showed that the most comparable source was the 4,130-in^3 array. The Nucleus+ results indicate that the horizontal surface-affected SEL source level for a single 8,000-in^3 array is approximately 218.2 dB, while the additional $10*\log_{10}(6)$ increases this to approximately 226 dB. Notably, the corresponding source level for the 4,130-in^3 source is approximately 232 dB. Thus, the total acoustic energy from six 8,000-in^3 Gemini sources remains lower than the conventional 4,130-in^3 array. The acoustic exposure modeling performed in support of the rule provides 24-hour exposure estimates for each species, specific to each modeled source and survey type in each zone and month.

No OBN surveys were included in the modeled survey types, and use of existing proxies (*i.e.,* 2D, 3D NAZ, 3D WAZ, Coil) is generally conservative for use in evaluation of 3D OBN survey effort, largely due to the greater area covered by the modeled proxies. Summary descriptions of these modeled survey geometries are available in the preamble to the proposed rule (91 FR 9014, 9018, February 24, 2026). Coil was selected as the best available proxy survey type in this case because the spatial coverage of the planned survey is most similar to the coil survey pattern. Among the different parameters of the modeled survey patterns (*e.g.,* area covered, line spacing, number of sources, shot interval, total simulated pulses), NMFS considers area covered per day to be most influential on daily modeled exposures exceeding Level B harassment criteria. Although TGS is not proposing to perform a survey using the coil geometry, the coil proxy is most representative of the effort planned by TGS in terms of predicted Level B harassment exposures.

The survey will take place over approximately 140 days with 90 days of sound source operation, including 85 days in zone 6 and 5 days in zone 5. The monthly distribution of survey days is not known in advance, though we assume that the planned 90 days of source operation would occur contiguously. Take estimates for each species are based on the time period that produces the greatest value.

For the Rice's whale, recent survey data, sightings, and acoustic data support Rice's whale occurrence in waters throughout the GOM between approximately 100 and 400 m depth along the continental shelf break, and associated habitat-based density modeling has identified similar habitat (*i.e.,* approximately 100 to 400 m water depths along the continental shelf break) as being Rice's whale habitat (Garrison *et al.,* 2023; Soldevilla *et al.,* 2022, 2024). NMFS' 2026 proposed rule provided detailed discussion regarding Rice's whale habitat (*e.g.,* 91 FR 9014, 9026, February 24, 2026).

TGS' planned activities will overlap this depth range, with approximately 12.1 percent of the area expected to be ensonified by the survey above RMS SPL of 160 dB (referenced to 1 micropascal (re 1 µPa)) overlapping the 100- to 400-m isobaths. Therefore, there is some reasonable potential for take of Rice's whale to occur in association with this survey. The generic acoustic exposure modeling results in one take of Rice's whales and we have rounded that up to a group size, authorizing two Rice's whale takes.

APEX 3

TGS plans to conduct a 3D OBN survey over 648 lease blocks in the East Breaks and Alaminos Canyon areas, with water depths ranging from approximately 900 to 2,800 m. See section F of the LOA application for a map of the area.

TGS plans to use a low-frequency airgun source known as Gemini (also referred to as a dual barbell source). Gemini airgun arrays will fire using the ''Seismic Apparition'' method, with a single-source vessel towing six sources (100 m separation), firing within 120 milliseconds with a predetermined dither to each source; no sources will fire simultaneously at any time.

The Gemini was not included in the acoustic exposure modeling developed in support of the rule. However, the Gemini was described and evaluated in support of a previous LOA, and we rely on that analysis here (88 FR 72739, October 23, 2023). For additional details regarding sources, see section C of the LOA application. Based on this information we have determined there will be no effects of magnitude or intensity different from those evaluated in support of the rule. NMFS therefore expects that use of modeling results supporting the final rule relating to use of airgun arrays is expected to be conservative as a proxy for use in evaluating potential impacts of use of the Gemini.

Consistent with the preamble to the 2026 final rule, the survey effort proposed by TGS in its LOA request was used to develop LOA-specific take estimates based on the acoustic exposure modeling results described in the preamble (91 FR 20784, April 17, 2026). In order to generate the appropriate take number for authorization, the following information was considered: (1) survey type; (2) location (by modeling zone [i]); (3) number of days; (4) source; and (5) month.[ii] To determine the most appropriate proxy array from the exposure modeling, the directionally dependent source level in a plane parallel to the sea surface was compared to the three airgun array sources which were originally modeled, including the 4,130-, 5,110-, and 8,000-in^3 arrays. Out of these three proxies, the source which had the smallest relative error (arithmetic mean difference taken over the azimuthal or vessel bearing angle) was chosen as the most representative proxy. For a single 8,000-in^3 Gemini source, surface affected waveforms were modeled by TGS using Nucleus+. To approximate the acoustic energy from six elements, the SEL for each frequency and aspect was adjusted by a factor of $10*\log_{10}(N)$, where N in this case is 6. The resulting spectra were used in the comparison tool. The results showed that the most comparable source was the

4,130-in^3 array. The Nucleus+ results indicate that the horizontal surface-affected SEL source level for a single 8,000-in^3 array is approximately 218.2 dB, while the additional $10*\log_{10}(6)$ increases this to approximately 226 dB. Notably, the corresponding source level for the 4,130-in^3 source is approximately 232 dB. Thus, the total acoustic energy from six 8,000-in^3 Gemini sources remains lower than the conventional 4,130-in^3 array. The acoustic exposure modeling performed in support of the rule provides 24-hour exposure estimates for each species, specific to each modeled source and survey type in each zone and month.

No OBN surveys were included in the modeled survey types, and use of existing proxies (*i.e.,* 2D, 3D NAZ, 3D WAZ, Coil) is generally conservative for use in evaluation of 3D OBN survey effort, largely due to the greater area covered by the modeled proxies. Summary descriptions of these modeled survey geometries are available in the preamble to the proposed rule (91 FR 9014, 9018, February 24, 2026). Coil was selected as the best available proxy survey type in this case because the spatial coverage of the planned survey is most similar to the coil survey pattern. Among the different parameters of the modeled survey patterns (*e.g.,* area covered, line spacing, number of sources, shot interval, total simulated pulses), NMFS considers area covered per day to be most influential on daily modeled exposures exceeding Level B harassment criteria. Although TGS is not proposing to perform a survey using the coil geometry, the coil proxy is most representative of the effort planned by TGS in terms of predicted Level B harassment exposures.

The survey will take place over approximately 180 days with 107 days of sound source operation, including 93 days in zone 6 and 14 days in zone 7. The monthly distribution of survey days is not known in advance, though we assume that the planned 107 days of source operation would occur contiguously. Take estimates for each species are based on the time period that produces the greatest value.

For the Rice's whale, take estimates based on the modeling yielded results that are not realistically likely to occur when considered in light of other relevant information concerning Rice's whale habitat preferences considered during the rulemaking process. NMFS' proposed rule provided detailed discussion regarding Rice's whale habitat (*e.g.,* 91 FR 9014, 9026, February 24, 2026). In summary, recent survey data, sightings, and acoustic data support Rice's whale occurrence in waters throughout the GOA between approximately 100 and 400 m depth along the continental shelf break, and associated habitat-based density modeling has identified similar habitat (*i.e.,* approximately 100 to 400 m water depths along the continental shelf break) as being Rice's whale habitat (Garrison *et al.,* 2023; Soldevilla *et al.,* 2022, 2024).

Although Rice's whales may occur outside of the general depth range expected to provide suitable habitat, we expect that any such occurrence would be rare. TGS' planned activities will occur in water depths of approximately 900–2,800 m in the central GOA. Thus, NMFS does not expect that take of Rice's whale is likely in association with this survey and, accordingly, does not authorize take of Rice's whale through the LOA.

Based on the results of our analysis, NMFS has determined that the level of taking expected for each survey and authorized through each of the LOAs is consistent with the findings made for the total taking allowable under the regulations. See table 1 in this notice and table 7 of the rule (91 FR 20784, April 17, 2026).

Small Numbers Determination

Under the rule, NMFS may not authorize incidental take of marine mammals in an LOA if it will exceed ''small numbers.'' In short, when an acceptable estimate of the individual marine mammals taken is available, if the estimated number of individual animals taken is up to, but not greater than, one-third of the best available abundance estimate, NMFS will determine that the numbers of marine mammals taken of a species or stock are small (91 FR 20784, April 17, 2026). For more information, please see NMFS' discussion of small numbers in the 2026 final rule (91 FR 20784, April 17, 2026).

For TGS' respective surveys, the take numbers for authorization are determined as described above in the Summary of Requests and Analysis section. Subsequently, the total incidents of harassment for each species are multiplied by scalar ratios (except in the cases where the take estimate has been rounded up to reflect a group size) to produce a derived product that better reflects the number of individuals likely to be taken within a survey (as compared to the total number of instances of take), accounting for the likelihood that some individual marine mammals may be taken on more than 1 day (91 FR 20784, April 17, 2026). The output of this scaling, where appropriate, is incorporated into adjusted total take estimates that are the basis for NMFS' small numbers determinations, as depicted in tables 1–3.

This product is used by NMFS in making the necessary small numbers determinations through comparison with the best available abundance estimates (see discussion at 91 FR 20784, 20812, April 17, 2026). For this comparison, NMFS' approach is to use the maximum theoretical population, determined through review of current stock assessment reports (SAR; *https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/marine-mammal-protection/marine-mammal-stock-assessments*) and model-predicted abundance information (*https://seamap.env.duke.edu/models/SEFSC/GOM/*). Information supporting the small numbers determinations is provided in tables 1–3.

TABLE 1—AMENDMENT 3 SURVEY TAKE ANALYSIS [1]

Species	Authorized take	Scaled take [1]	Abundance [2]	Percent abundance
Rice's whale	2	.....	51	3.9
Kogia spp.	[3] 429	129	1,385	11.2
Atlantic spotted dolphin	837	240	21,506	1.1
Bottlenose dolphin	2,851	818	166,538	0.5
Clymene dolphin	2,455	705	6,136	11.5
Beaked whales	3,272	330	1,038	31.8
Fraser's dolphin	1,066	306	1,665	18.4
Blackfish [4]	6,779	2,000	9,535	21
Pantropical spotted dolphin	27,328	7,843	50,209	15.6
Risso's dolphin	798	236	1,974	11.9
Rough-toothed dolphin	2,791	801	4,853	16.5

TABLE 1—AMENDMENT 3 SURVEY TAKE ANALYSIS [1]—Continued

Species	Authorized take	Scaled take [1]	Abundance [2]	Percent abundance
Short-finned pilot whale	1,160	342	3,277	10.4
Sperm whale	1,092	462	2,451	18.8
Spinner dolphin	530	152	2,991	5.1
Striped dolphin	6,989	2,006	16,102	12.5

[1] Scalar ratios were applied to ''Authorized Take'' values as described at 91 FR 20784 (April 17, 2026) to derive scaled take numbers shown here.

[2] Best abundance estimate. For most taxa, the best abundance estimate for purposes of comparison with take estimates is considered here to be the model-predicted abundance (Garrison *et al.,* 2023). For Rice's whale, Atlantic spotted dolphin, spinner dolphin, and Risso's dolphin, the estimated SAR abundance estimate is used.

[3] Includes 26 takes by Level A harassment and 403 takes by Level B harassment. Scalar ratio is applied to takes by Level B harassment only; small numbers determination made on basis of scaled Level B harassment take plus authorized Level A harassment take.

[4] The ''blackfish'' guild includes melon-headed whales, false killer whales, pygmy killer whales, and killer whales.

TABLE 2—APEX 2 SURVEY TAKE ANALYSIS [1]

Species	Authorized take	Scaled take [1]	Abundance [2]	Percent abundance
Rice's whale	2	.....	51	3.9
Kogia spp.	[3] 258	79	1,385	6.6
Atlantic spotted dolphin	4,156	1,193	21,506	5.5
Bottlenose dolphin	2,592	744	166,538	0.4
Clymene dolphin	3,116	894	6,136	14.6
Beaked whales	400	40	1,038	3.9
Fraser's dolphin	744	214	1,665	12.8
Blackfish [4]	5,028	1,483	9,535	15.6
Pantropical spotted dolphin	12,318	3,535	50,209	7
Risso's dolphin	486	143	1,974	7.3
Rough-toothed dolphin	1,877	539	4,853	11.1
Short-finned pilot whale	2,494	736	3,277	22.4
Sperm whale	682	289	2,451	11.8
Spinner dolphin	34	10	2,991	0.3
Striped dolphin	2,011	577	16,102	3.6

[1] Scalar ratios were applied to ''Authorized Take'' values as described 91 FR 20784, 20818 (April 17, 2026) to derive scaled take numbers shown here.

[2] Best abundance estimate. For most taxa, the best abundance estimate for purposes of comparison with take estimates is considered here to be the model-predicted abundance (Garrison *et al.,* 2023). For Rice's whale, Atlantic spotted dolphin, spinner dolphin, and Risso's dolphin, the estimated SAR abundance estimate is used.

[3] Includes 13 takes by Level A harassment and 245 takes by Level B harassment. Scalar ratio is applied to takes by Level B harassment only; small numbers determination made on basis of scaled Level B harassment take plus authorized Level A harassment take.

[4] The ''blackfish'' guild includes melon-headed whales, false killer whales, pygmy killer whales, and killer whales.

TABLE 3—APEX 3 SURVEY TAKE ANALYSIS [1]

Species	Authorized take	Scaled take [1]	Abundance [2]	Percent abundance
Rice's whale	0	.....	51	n/a
Kogia spp.	[3] 329	100	1,385	8.5
Atlantic spotted dolphin	4,489	1,288	21,506	6
Bottlenose dolphin	2,659	763	166,538	0.5
Clymene dolphin	3,724	1,069	6,136	17.4
Beaked whales	305	31	1,038	3
Fraser's dolphin	850	244	1,665	14.6
Blackfish [4]	5,882	1,735	9,535	18.2
Pantropical spotted dolphin	12,251	3,516	50,209	7
Risso's dolphin	523	154	1,974	7.8
Rough-toothed dolphin	2,102	603	4,853	12.4
Short-finned pilot whale	2,623	774	3,277	23.6
Sperm whale	770	326	2,451	13.3
Spinner dolphin	46	13	2,991	0.4
Striped dolphin	3,117	895	16,102	5.6

[1] Scalar ratios were applied to ''Authorized Take'' values as described at 91 FR 20784, 20818 (April 17, 2026) to derive scaled take numbers shown here.

[2] Best abundance estimate. For most taxa, the best abundance estimate for purposes of comparison with take estimates is considered here to be the model-predicted abundance (Garrison *et al.,* 2023). For Rice's whale, Atlantic spotted dolphin, spinner dolphin, and Risso's dolphin, the estimated SAR abundance estimate is used.

[3] Includes 18 takes by Level A harassment and 311 takes by Level B harassment. Scalar ratio is applied to takes by Level B harassment only; small numbers determination made on basis of scaled Level B harassment take plus authorized Level A harassment take.

[4] The ''blackfish'' guild includes melon-headed whales, false killer whales, pygmy killer whales, and killer whales.

Based on the analysis contained herein of TGS' planned survey activities described in their respective LOA applications and the anticipated take of marine mammals, NMFS finds that for each LOA, small numbers of marine mammals will be taken relative to the affected species or stock sizes (*i.e.,* less than one-third of the best available abundance estimate) and therefore the taking is of no more than small numbers for each LOA.

Authorization

NMFS has determined that the level of taking for each LOA request is consistent with the findings made for the total taking allowable under the ITRs and that the amount of take authorized under each LOA is of no more than small numbers. Accordingly, we have issued three LOAs TGS, authorizing the take of marine mammals incidental to its geophysical survey activity, as described above.

Dated: June 24, 2026.

Kimberly Damon-Randall,

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

Endnotes

[1] Pursuant to Executive Order 14172, ''Restoring Names That Honor American Greatness,'' and Department of the Interior Secretarial Order 3423, ''The Gulf of America,'' the body of water formerly known as the Gulf of Mexico is now called the Gulf of America.

[2] For purposes of acoustic exposure modeling, the GOA was divided into seven zones. Zone 1 is not included in the geographic scope of the rule.

[3] Acoustic propagation modeling was performed for two seasons: Winter (December–March) and Summer (April–November). Marine mammal density data is generally available on a monthly basis, and therefore further refines take estimates temporally.

[FR Doc. 2026–12985 Filed 6–26–26; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648–XF835]

Fisheries of the South Atlantic; Southeast Data, Assessment, and Review; Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice of review workshop.

SUMMARY: The review of the Southeast Data Assessment and Review (SEDAR) 104 Atlantic Dolphinfish Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) will be conducted via an in person Review Workshop. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**.

DATES: The SEDAR 104 Review Workshop will be held from 8:30 a.m. on July 28, 2026, until 12 p.m. on July 31, 2026.

ADDRESSES:

Meeting address: The SEDAR 104 Review Workshop will be held at the Hilton Garden Inn Charleston Airport Hotel, 5265 International Boulevard, North Charleston, SC 29418.

SEDAR address: 4055 Faber Place Drive, Suite 201, North Charleston, SC 29405.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Emily Ott, SEDAR Coordinator; (843) 302–8434. Email: *Emily.Ott@safmc.net.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Gulf, South Atlantic, and Caribbean Fishery Management Councils, in conjunction with NOAA Fisheries and the Atlantic and Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commissions have implemented the SEDAR process, a multi-step method for determining the status of fish stocks in the Southeast Region. This MSE project is separate from traditional data collection processes used to inform stock assessments. Rather than producing a traditional stock assessment, this MSE will generate both an operating model and management procedures to inform stock status and management implications. Participants for SEDAR Workshops are appointed by the Gulf, South Atlantic, and Caribbean Fishery Management Councils and NOAA Fisheries Southeast Regional Office, Highly Migratory Species Management Division, and Southeast Fisheries Science Center. Participants include data collectors and database managers; stock assessment scientists, biologists, and researchers; constituency representatives including fishermen, environmentalists, and non-governmental organizations; International experts; and staff of Councils, Commissions, and state and Federal agencies.

The items of discussion in the Review Workshop are as follows: Participants will evaluate the management strategy evaluation operating model report, as specified in the Terms of Reference for the workshop and determine if they are scientifically sound.

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

Special Accommodations

These meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to the Council office (see **ADDRESSES**) at least 5 business days prior to each workshop.

Note: The times and sequence specified in this agenda are subject to change.

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

Dated: June 25, 2026.

Rey Israel Marquez,

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

[FR Doc. 2026–13070 Filed 6–26–26; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648–XF832]

Fisheries of the Gulf of America; Southeast Data, Assessment, and Review; Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice of review workshop.

SUMMARY: The Southeast Data Assessment and Review (SEDAR) 100 assessment process of Gulf gray triggerfish will consist of a Data Workshop, and a series of assessment webinars, and a Review Workshop. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**.

DATES: The SEDAR 100 Review Workshop will be held from 8:30 a.m. on August 11, 2026, until 12 p.m. on August 14, 2026.

ADDRESSES:

Meeting address: The SEDAR 100 Review Workshop will be held at the Hilton Tampa Airport Westshore, 2225 N Lois Ave., Tampa, FL 33607.

SEDAR address: 4055 Faber Place Drive, Suite 201, North Charleston, SC 29405.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Julie A. Neer, SEDAR Coordinator; (843) 571–4366. Email: *Julie.neer@safmc.net.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Gulf, South Atlantic, and Caribbean Fishery