

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) will hold a public information meeting to gather input on the likely impacts of alternative spiny dogfish trip limits.

DATES: The meeting will be held Thursday, April 7, 2016, from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held via webinar with a telephone-only connection option.

Council address: Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, 800 N. State St., Suite 201, Dover, DE 19901; telephone: (302) 674-2331.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Christopher M. Moore, Ph.D. Executive Director, Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council; telephone: (302) 526-5255. The Council's Web site, www.mafmc.org also has details on the proposed agenda, webinar access, and briefing materials.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: For 2016-18 specifications, the Mid-Atlantic and New England Fishery Management Councils took no action on the spiny dogfish trip limit, which would maintain the current 5,000 pound trip limit. The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) has requested that the trip limit be increased to 6,000 pounds (http://www.mafmc.org/s/2016_Spiny-Dogfish-to-GARFO_trip-limits-REB-edits_AH-2.pdf), and this webinar-based meeting will gather public input on the potential impacts of changing the spiny dogfish trip limit.

Special Accommodations

The meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aid should be directed to M. Jan Saunders, (302) 526-5251, at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

Dated: March 17, 2016.

Tracey L. Thompson,

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

[FR Doc. 2016-06389 Filed 3-21-16; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XE481

Marine Mammals; File No. 19706

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 California State University, Bakersfield [Responsible Party: Antje Lauer, Ph.D.], 9001 Stockdale Highway, Bakersfield, CA 93311-1022, has applied in due form for a permit to conduct research on pinnipeds for scientific research, and receive, import, and export specimens from these species.

DATES: Written, telefaxed, or email comments must be received on or before April 21, 2016.

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. 19706 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. 19706 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: Rosa L. González or Jennifer Skidmore; phone: (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 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 blood sera from up to 500 California sea lions (*Zalophus*

californianus), 25 threatened Guadalupe fur seals (*Arctocephalus townsendi*), and 25 northern fur seals (*Callorhinus ursinus*) in rehabilitation annually to perform immunodiffusion assays. In addition, the applicant proposes to perform the Spherusol skin test on up to 500 California sea lions in rehabilitation annually. The skin test includes administering a drug intradermally and subsequent observation, photograph/video of swelling/induration after a period of time (*i.e.*, hours). The objective is to research Coccidioidomycosis (Valley fever) on stranded marine mammals along California's coast. The goal is to successfully detect the animal's exposure to *Coccidioides* spp. and compare the sensitivity of the tests to further health studies on the above-named marine mammal species. A permit is requested for a 3-year period.

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: March 16, 2016.

Julia Harrison,

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

[FR Doc. 2016-06343 Filed 3-21-16; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XE501

National Essential Fish Habitat Summit Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: The National Marine Fisheries Service will host a public meeting, consisting of representatives from the Regional Fishery Management Councils, the National Marine Fisheries Service, and interested members of the public. The purpose of the meeting is to identify and share opportunities,

challenges, and successful approaches for the effective implementation of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act Essential Fish Habitat authorities. Registration is required, and participation may be limited. See <http://www.fisheriesforum.org/our-work/special-projects/efh-summit> for more information and to register.

DATES: The meeting will begin Tuesday, May 17, 2016, at 8:30 a.m. and will end on Thursday, May 19, 2016, at 3 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Westin Annapolis, 100 Westgate Circle, Annapolis, MD 21401, telephone: 410-972-4300.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Terra Lederhouse at (301) 427-8639 or terra.lederhouse@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) Summit is a collaborative effort between the National Marine Fisheries Service, the Regional Fishery Management Councils, and the Fisheries Leadership and Sustainability Forum. The final agenda will be responsive to the interests, questions, and areas of expertise among participating National Marine Fisheries Service and Regional Fishery Management Council representatives, and may include discussions on EFH conservation roles, responsibilities, and process, the use of habitat science for management decisions, EFH and the changing marine environment, and the future of EFH conservation. A copy of the final agenda will be available at <http://www.fisheriesforum.org/our-work/special-projects/efh-summit>.

Special Accommodations

The meeting location is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Terra Lederhouse at (301) 427-8639 at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

Dated: March 17, 2016.

Carrie Selberg,

Deputy Director, Office of Habitat Conservation, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 2016-06414 Filed 3-21-16; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XE468

Takes of Marine Mammals Incidental to Specified Activities; Seabird Research Activities in Central California, 2016-2017

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

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

SUMMARY: NMFS (hereinafter, “we” or “our”) received an application from Point Blue Conservation Science (Point Blue) requesting an Incidental Harassment Authorization (Authorization) to take marine mammals, by harassment, incidental to conducting proposed seabird research activities on Southeast Farallon Island, Año Nuevo Island, and Point Reyes National Seashore in central California from May 2016 through May 2017. Per the Marine Mammal Protection Act, we request comments on our proposal to issue an Authorization to Point Blue to incidentally take, by Level B harassment only, five species [*i.e.*, California sea lion (*Zalophus californianus*), Pacific harbor seal (*Phoca vitulina*), northern elephant seal (*Mirounga angustirostris*), northern fur seal (*Callorhinus ursinus*), and Steller sea lion (*Eumetopias jubatus*)] of marine mammals during the specified activity.

DATES: NMFS must receive comments and information no later than April 21, 2016.

ADDRESSES: Address comments on the application to Jolie Harrison, Chief, Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910. The mailbox address for providing email comments is ITP.Pauline@noaa.gov. You must include 0648-XE468 in the subject line. We are not responsible for email comments sent to addresses other than the one provided here. Comments sent via email, including all attachments, must not exceed a 25-megabyte file size. NMFS is not responsible for email comments sent to addresses other than the one provided here.

Instructions: All submitted comments are a part of the public record and NMFS will post them to <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/permits/incidental/>

[research.htm](#) without change. All Personal Identifying Information (for example, name, address, etc.) voluntarily submitted by the commenter may be publicly accessible. Do not submit confidential business information or otherwise sensitive or protected information.

To obtain an electronic copy of the 2016 renewal request, the 2015 application, our draft Environmental Assessment (EA), or a list of the references, write to the previously mentioned address, telephone the contact listed here (see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**), or visit the Internet at: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/permits/incidental/research.htm>.

Information in Point Blue’s application, our draft EA and this notice collectively provide the environmental information related to the proposed issuance of the Authorization for public review and comment.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Robt Pauline, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS (301) 427-8401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Sections 101(a)(5)(A) and (D) of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended (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 of a species or population stock, by U.S. citizens who engage in a specified activity (other than commercial fishing) within a specified geographical region if, after NMFS provides a notice of a proposed authorization to the public for review and comment: (1) NMFS makes certain findings; and (2) the taking is limited to harassment.

An Authorization for incidental takings for marine mammals 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 taking 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.”

Summary of Request

On September 29, 2015, NMFS received an application from Point Blue