

mentioned previously in this document, the proposed seismic survey will not destroy marine mammal habitat.

Of the 26 marine mammal species likely to occur in the proposed survey area, six are listed as endangered under the ESA: The humpback, sei, fin, blue, and sperm whale and the Hawaiian monk seal. These species are also considered depleted under the MMPA. However, no take of endangered humpback, sei, or fin, whales was requested because of the low likelihood of encountering these species during the cruise.

For the 20 species for which take was requested, the requested take numbers are small (each, less than two and one-half percent) relative to the population size. The population estimates for the species that may potentially be taken as a result of L-DEO's proposed seismic survey were presented earlier in this document. For reasons described earlier in this document, the maximum calculated number of individual marine mammals for each species that could potentially be taken by harassment is small relative to the overall population sizes (0.06 percent for Bryde's whales, less than 0.01 percent for the endangered blue whale, 0.17 percent for the endangered sperm whale, and less than 2.5 percent of the other 15 mammal populations or stocks).

Based on the analysis contained herein of the likely effects of the specified activity on marine mammals and their habitat, and taking into consideration the implementation of the mitigation and monitoring measures, NMFS preliminarily finds that L-DEO's planned research activities, will result in the incidental take of small numbers of marine mammals, by Level B harassment only, and that the total taking from the marine geophysical survey will have a negligible impact on the affected species or stocks.

Impact on Availability of Affected Species or Stock for Taking for Subsistence Uses

There are no relevant subsistence uses of marine mammals implicated by this action.

Endangered Species Act

Of the species of marine mammals that may occur in the proposed survey area, six are listed as endangered under the ESA, including the humpback, sei, fin, blue, and sperm whales and the Hawaiian monk seal. However, L-DEO is only requested Level B incidental harassment of two species: The humpback and sperm whales. L-DEO did not request take of endangered humpback, sei, or fin, whales because of

the low likelihood of encountering these species during the cruise. Under section 7 of the ESA, NSF has initiated formal consultation with the NMFS, Office of Protected Resources, Endangered Species Division, on this proposed seismic survey. NMFS' Office of Protected Resources, Permits, Conservation and Education Division, has initiated formal consultation under section 7 of the ESA with NMFS' Office of Protected Resources, Endangered Species Division, to obtain a Biological Opinion evaluating the effects of issuing the IHA on threatened and endangered marine mammals and, if appropriate, authorizing incidental take. NMFS will conclude formal section 7 consultation prior to making a determination on whether or not to issue the IHA. If the IHA is issued, L-DEO, in addition to the mitigation and monitoring requirements included in the IHA, will be required to comply with the Terms and Conditions of the Incidental Take Statement corresponding to NMFS' Biological Opinion issued to both NSF and NMFS' Office of Protected Resources.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

To meet NMFS' National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA; 42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*) requirements for the issuance of an IHA to L-DEO, NMFS will prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) titled "Issuance of an Incidental Harassment Authorization to the Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory to Take Marine Mammals by Harassment Incidental to a Marine Geophysical Survey in the Central Pacific Ocean, November, 2011 through January, 2012." This EA will incorporate the NSF's Environmental Analysis Pursuant To Executive Order 12114 (NSF, 2010) and an associated report (Report) prepared by LGL Limited Environmental Research Associates (LGL) for NSF, titled, "Environmental Assessment of a Marine Geophysical Survey by the R/V *Marcus G. Langseth* in the Central Pacific Ocean, November–December 2011," by reference pursuant to 40 CFR 1502.21 and NOAA Administrative Order (NAO) 216–6 § 5.09(d). Prior to making a final decision on the IHA application, NMFS will make a decision of whether or not to issue a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

Proposed Authorization

As a result of these preliminary determinations, NMFS proposes to authorize the take of marine mammals incidental to L-DEO's proposed marine seismic survey in the central Pacific Ocean, provided the previously

mentioned mitigation, monitoring, and reporting requirements are incorporated.

Dated: September 14, 2011.

James H. Lecky,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Office of the Secretary

Meeting of the Department of Defense Wage Committee

AGENCY: Department of Defense.

ACTION: Notice of closed meetings.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the provisions of section 10 of Public Law 92–463, the Federal Advisory Committee Act, notice is hereby given that a closed meeting of the Department of Defense Wage Committee will be held on Tuesday, October 4, 2011, at 10 a.m. at 1400 Key Boulevard, Level A, Room A101, Rosslyn, Virginia 22209.

Under the provisions of section 10(d) of Public Law 92–463, the Department of Defense has determined that the meetings meet the criteria to close meetings to the public because the matters to be considered are related to internal rules and practices of the Department of Defense and the detailed wage data to be considered were obtained from officials of private establishments with a guarantee that the data will be held in confidence.

However, members of the public who may wish to do so are invited to submit material in writing to the chairman concerning matters believed to be deserving of the Committee's attention.

Additional information concerning the meetings may be obtained by writing to the Chairman, Department of Defense Wage Committee, 4000 Defense Pentagon, Washington, DC 20301–4000.

Dated: September 13, 2011.

Patricia L. Toppings,

*OSD Federal Register Liaison Officer,
Department of Defense.*

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Office of the Secretary

Meeting of the Department of Defense Wage Committee

AGENCY: Department of Defense.

ACTION: Notice of closed meetings.