

gear. Other than gear markings, all trap trawls would be consistent with the regulations of the management area where the vessel is fishing and would be fished in accordance with the participating vessels' standard operations (*i.e.*, number and length of trips, soak times, trap limits, etc.). Additionally, electronic monitoring systems, which include onboard cameras and global positioning system (GPS) tracking, will be installed on each participating vessel to document the setting and retrieval of all GTR-equipped trawls.

NEMM researchers anticipate up to 660 total hauls of hybrid trawls. Trap trawls would be consistent with Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan regulations. Trawls would not exceed the maximum allowed traps per trawl for the management area they are being fished in, and would be fished for up to 5 days, depending on which preset GTR is used.

NEMM has agreed to the following best management and risk-reduction practices:

- Experimental buoy lines will be marked with unique white and blue markings above the required regional markings;
- All vessels will provide mandatory, weekly gear loss and conflict reports to the Principal Investigator (PI), and the PI will provide monthly gear loss and conflict reports to us;
- After release, the on-demand vertical lines will be retrieved as quickly as possible to minimize time in the water column;
- All vessels will record right whale sightings on data sheets, and will notify NMFS via email (ne.rw.survey@noaa.gov), or NOAA via phone (866-755-6622), or the U.S. Coast Guard (Channel 16);
- All vessels will adhere to a 10-knot (18.5 kilometers per hour) speed limit when transiting dynamic management areas, transiting areas closed to vertical lines, and/or when whales are observed;
- All vessels will adhere to current approach regulations that create a 500-yard (457 meters (m)) buffer zone in the presence of a surfacing right whale and will depart immediately at a safe and slow speed. Hauling any fishing gear will cease once the entire string or trawl is aboard the vessel, to accommodate the regulation, and be redeployed only after it is reasonable to assume the whale left the area; and
- Law enforcement will be able to inspect gear at any time because one traditional surface-marking will be present at all times. The PI will notify

law enforcement agencies (NOAA Office of Law Enforcement and Maine Marine Patrol) of project participants and activities in advance of the project start date, including:

- Materials related to the redeployment of alternative gear-retrieval systems; and
- Information necessary to continue relevant enforcement operations with participant gear.

If approved, the applicant may request minor modifications and extensions to the EFP throughout the year. 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: May 12, 2025.

Kelly Denit,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648-XE869]

Marine Mammals; File No. 28847

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

ACTION: Notice; receipt of application.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that Allyson Hindle, Ph.D., University of Nevada Las Vegas, 4505 South Maryland Parkway, MS 4004, Las Vegas, NV 89154, has applied in due form for a permit to receive, import, and export parts from marine mammals for scientific research.

DATES: Written comments must be received on or before June 16, 2025.

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 home page, <https://apps.nmfs.noaa.gov>, and then selecting File No. 28847 from the list of available applications. These documents are also

available upon written request via email to NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov.

Written comments on this application should be submitted via email to NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov. Please include File No. 28847 in the subject line of the email comment.

Those individuals requesting a public hearing should submit a written request via email to NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov. The request should set forth the specific reasons why a hearing on this application would be appropriate.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Shasta McClenahan, Ph.D., or Jennifer Skidmore at (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 parts 222-226), and the Fur Seal Act of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1151 *et seq.*).

The applicant requests a 10-year permit to receive, import, and export parts from up to 100 individual cetaceans and 100 individual pinnipeds (excluding walrus), annually. Sources of foreign and domestic parts may include subsistence harvests, captive animals, authorized researchers, curated collections, bycatch from legal commercial fishing operations, and foreign stranded animals. Parts would be used for scientific research to study marine mammal basic biology and physiology.

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: May 12, 2025.

Kimberly Damon-Randall,

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

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