

humpback whale (*Megaptera novaeangliae*), North Atlantic right whale (*Eubalaena glacialis*), sei whale (*B. borealis*), sperm whale (*Physeter macrocephalus*), green sea turtle (*Chelonia mydas*), hawksbill sea turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*), loggerhead sea turtle (*Caretta caretta*), Kemp's ridley sea turtle (*Lepidochelys kempii*), and leatherback sea turtle (*Dermochelys coriacea*). The permit expires May 15, 2017.

The permit holder is requesting the permit be amended to increase sei whale takes from 10 to 50 per year based on reviewer comments from the Notice of Receipt published on August 17, 2011 (76 FR 51001). The purpose of the take increase is to gain more information on sei whale habitat use and distribution.

An environmental assessment (EA) and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) (signed May 1, 2012) prepared for the permit has analyzed the requested 50 sei whale annual takes. NMFS determined that 50 sei whale takes would not significantly impact the quality of the human environment and that preparation of an environmental impact statement was not required. The EA and FONSI are available upon request. A Biological Opinion was also prepared for the permit which analyzed 50 sei whale takes (signed May 1, 2012) and concluded that the research would not jeopardize threatened and endangered species or destroy or adversely modify critical habitat. However, the permit authorizes 10 annual takes of sei whales until a new FR notice could be published to allow the public opportunity to comment on the higher take number.

Concurrent with the publication of this notice in the **Federal Register**, NMFS is forwarding copies of the amendment request to the Marine Mammal Commission and its Committee of Scientific Advisors.

Dated: May 30, 2012.

Tammy C. Adams,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XR52

Marine Mammals; File No. 14534

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and

Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice; issuance of permit amendment.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that a major amendment to Permit No. 14534-01 has been issued to NOAA's Office of Science and Technology, Silver Spring, MD, (Brandon Southall, Ph.D.—Principal Investigator) for research on marine mammals.

ADDRESSES: The permit amendment and related documents are available for review upon written request or by appointment in the following offices:

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; and Southwest Region, NMFS, 501 West Ocean Blvd., Suite 4200, Long Beach, CA 90802-4213; phone (562)980-4001; fax (562)980-4018.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Tammy Adams or Carrie Hubard, (301)427-8401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On December 9, 2011, notice was published in the **Federal Register** (76 FR 76949) that the above-named applicant submitted a request for an amendment to Permit No. 14534-01 to conduct research on humpback whales (*Megaptera novaeangliae*), minke whales (*Balaenoptera acutorostrata*), and killer whales (*Orcinus orca*). The requested permit amendment has been issued under the authority of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended (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.*), and the regulations governing the taking, importing, and exporting of endangered and threatened species (50 CFR parts 222-226).

The amendment increases the take numbers for these three cetacean species, making them focal species under the permit, subject to tagging and intentional exposure to sound playbacks with associated behavioral observations. The location of the research is unchanged and remains focused in the waters within the U.S. Navy's Southern California Range Complex, and primarily near the vicinity of San Clemente Island. The amendment is valid through the original expiration date of the permit, July 31, 2015.

An environmental assessment (EA) analyzing the effects of the permitted activities on the human environment

was prepared in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*). Based on the analyses in the EA, NMFS determined that issuance of the permit would not significantly impact the quality of the human environment and that preparation of an environmental impact statement was not required. That determination is documented in a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), signed on May 14, 2012.

As required by the ESA, issuance of this permit was based on a finding that such permit: (1) Was applied for in good faith; (2) will not operate to the disadvantage of such endangered species; and (3) is consistent with the purposes and policies set forth in section 2 of the ESA.

Dated: May 30, 2012.

Tammy C. Adams,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XA817

Marine Mammals; File No. 16124

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

ACTION: Notice; issuance of permit.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that Sea World LLC, 9205 South Park Center Loop, Suite 400, Orlando, FL 32819 (Brad Andrews, Responsible Party), has been issued a permit to conduct research on and enhancement of captive Hawaiian monk seals (*Monachus schauinslandi*).

ADDRESSES: The permit and related documents are available for review upon written request or by appointment in the following offices:

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;

Pacific Islands Region, NMFS, 1601 Kapiolani Boulevard, Room 1110, Honolulu, HI 96814-4700; phone (808) 944-2200; fax (808) 973-2941; and

Southeast Region, NMFS, 263 13th Avenue South, Saint Petersburg,