

Only one copy of the application form will be provided to each organization requesting it, but it may be reproduced by the requester. An original and two copies of the application and supplemental material are to be sent to the Office of Export Promotion Coordination, International Trade Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce, 14th Street and Constitution Avenue, N.W., Room 2003, Washington, D.C. 20230.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: David C. Bowie, Deputy Director, Office of Export Promotion Coordination, tel. (202) 482-4501. This is not a toll-free number.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On May 26, 1995, President Clinton announced the adoption of Model Principles for U.S. firms in their overseas operations, as follows:

Model Business Principles

Recognizing the positive role of U.S. business in upholding and promoting adherence to universal standards of human rights, the Administration encourages all businesses to adopt and implement voluntary codes of conduct for doing business around the world that cover at least the following areas:

1. Provision of a safe and healthful workplace.
2. Fair employment practices, including avoidance of child and forced labor and avoidance of discrimination based on race, gender, national origin or religious beliefs; and respect for the right of association and the right to organize and bargain collectively.
3. Responsible environmental protection and environmental practices.
4. Compliance with U.S. and local laws promoting good business practices, including laws prohibiting illicit payments and ensuring fair competition.
5. Maintenance, through leadership at all levels, of a corporate culture that respects free expression consistent with legitimate business concerns, and does not condone political coercion in the workplace; that encourages good corporate citizenship and makes a positive contribution to the communities in which the company operates; and where ethical conduct is recognized, valued and exemplified by all employees.

In adopting voluntary codes of conduct that reflect these principles, U.S. companies should serve as models, encouraging similar behavior by their partners, suppliers, and subcontractors.

Adoption of codes of conduct reflecting these principles is voluntary. Companies are encouraged to develop their own codes of conduct appropriate to their particular circumstances. Many companies already apply standards or codes that incorporate these principles. Companies should find appropriate means to inform their shareholders and the public of actions undertaken in connection with these principles. Nothing in the principles is intended to require a company to act in

violation of host country or U.S. law. This statement of principles is not intended for legislation."

The Best Global Practices award will be presented to a company that has established programs that show leadership and accomplishment in meeting the goals of one or more of these five Model Principles during the company's last three years of operations.

Who may apply: Any U.S. company may apply for the award. For purposes of this award, a U.S. company is defined as one that is incorporated in the United States. A U.S. company may apply on its own behalf, and outside organizations and individuals may apply on behalf of an eligible company (with that company's consent).

Selection of award winners: The Secretary of Commerce will select a winner or winners with the advice of an interagency group consisting of representatives from the Departments of Justice, State, Labor, and the Environmental Protection Agency. The Secretary may also seek the advice of private sector experts in the fields covered by the Model Business Principles.

How to Apply: Completed applications should be sent to the Office of Export Promotion Coordination, International Trade Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce, 14th Street and Constitution Avenue, N.W., Room 2003, Washington, D.C. 20230, postmarked not later than October 11, 1996.

Each item set forth in the application form should be addressed. Failure to submit all applicable information may delay processing of the application. Supplemental materials (annual reports, documentary material, etc.) are encouraged. Inquiries regarding the application process should also be forwarded to this office. Applicants will be notified by mail of the receipt of their applications and also any deficiencies in the application. When the award process is complete, all applicants will be notified by mail.

Information collection: The information is being collected in order to allow the Department of Commerce to judge applicants for the Best Global Practices Award. The information submitted by applicants will be used by the Department and the panel of judges drawn from government agencies to select the applicant whose conduct best exemplifies the Best Global Practices. The information called for in the application is voluntary, but must be submitted in order to be considered for the Best Global Practices Award. Applicants are advised not to include business confidential information

because confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person is required to respond to nor shall a person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with a collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act unless that collection of information displays a currently valid OMB Control Number.

OMB Control Number 0625-0226, expiration date November 30, 1996.

Dated: July 19, 1996.

David C. Bowie,
Deputy Director, Office of Export Promotion and Coordination.

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BILLING CODE 3510-DR-U

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 050196A]

Taking and Importing of Marine Mammals; Offshore Seismic Activities in the Beaufort Sea

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

ACTION: Notice of issuance of an incidental harassment authorization.

SUMMARY: In accordance with provisions of the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) as amended, notification is hereby given that an Incidental Harassment Authorization to take small numbers of bowhead whales and other marine mammals by harassment incidental to conducting seismic surveys in the Northstar Unit and nearby waters, in the Beaufort Sea in state and federal waters has been issued to BP Exploration (Alaska) 900 East Benson Boulevard, Anchorage, AK 99519 (BPXA).

EFFECTIVE DATE: This authorization is effective from July 18, 1996, until November 1, 1996, unless extended.

ADDRESSES: The application, authorization, revised monitoring plan, and environmental assessment (EA) are available by writing to the Chief, Marine Mammal Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910-3225, by telephoning one of the contacts listed below or by leaving a voice mail request at (301) 713-4070.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kenneth R. Hollingshead, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, (301) 713-

2055, Ron Morris, Western Alaska Field Office, NMFS, (907) 271-5006.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Section 101(a)(5)(A) and (D) of the MMPA (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*) directs the Secretary of Commerce to allow, upon request, the incidental, but not intentional taking 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, notice of a proposed authorization is provided to the public for review.

Permission may 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, and the permissible methods of taking and requirements pertaining to the monitoring and reporting of such taking are set forth.

On April 10, 1996 (61 FR 15884), NMFS published an interim rule establishing, among other things, procedures for issuing incidental harassment authorizations under section 101(a)(5)(D) of the MMPA in Arctic waters. For additional information on the procedures to be followed for this authorization, please refer to that document.

Summary of Request

On March 18, 1996, NMFS received an application from BPXA requesting an authorization for the harassment of small numbers of several species of marine mammals incidental to conducting seismic surveys during the open water season in waters in the Northstar Unit and in nearby waters, located in the U.S. Beaufort Sea. The survey is expected to take place between approximately July 20 and October 20, 1996, but would continue longer if ice conditions permit. A detailed description of the work planned is contained in the application and is available upon request (see **ADDRESSES**).

Comments and Responses

On May 20 and 21, 1996, NMFS met in Seattle, WA, with the applicant, the North Slope Borough, Minerals Management Service, and the Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission (AEWC) to discuss the proposed monitoring plan. As a result of those discussions, the monitoring plan that was submitted with the application was revised. The revised monitoring plan that was

submitted to NMFS and participants on June 11, 1996 was reviewed by a peer-review committee on or about June 1, 1996. This document is available upon request (see **ADDRESSES**).

A notice of receipt of the application and proposed authorization was published on May 28, 1996 (61 FR 26501) and a 30-day public comment period was provided on the application and proposed authorization. During the comment period, the comments received were from the applicant, the Marine Mammal Commission (MMC), the peer-review committee for the monitoring plan, and from one scientist retained by the AEWC. The comments of the applicant pertained to minor corrections to the proposed authorization notice, most notably that the survey is an ocean bottom cable survey, not a seismic streamer survey, and that ramp-up of the source, as proposed, was not technologically feasible. As a result, the ramp-up requirement has been modified to mandate that the procedure begin by firing the smallest gun first, and then adding additional guns in sequence until the full array is firing. Comments by the reviewers mentioned above that discuss issues pertaining to the contents of the monitoring plan, and the composition of the peer-review monitoring team, are not discussed further because these comments are limited either to procedures for conducting surveys and processing data, or events that have been completed, and not on the potential impact on marine mammals from the survey. Comments by the MMC concerning impacts and assessments of marine mammal takes are addressed below. Additional information on the activity and authorization request can be found in the proposed authorization notice and is not repeated here.

Comment 1: Noise from the seismic source may not be the sole source for marine mammal harassment. Noise from seismic and support vessels and aircraft may also result in noise.

Response: Noise from these identified sources is recognized as a secondary source for potential harassment of marine mammals. These sources are authorized under the incidental harassment authorization. The monitoring program addresses monitoring for this source of potential taking.

Comment 2: The documents seem to assume that there is no risk of marine mammals being hit and killed or injured by any of the vessels or becoming entangled and killed or injured in the airgun arrays. The MMC recommends that the authorization is automatically

suspended if a marine mammal is hit and killed by vessels.

Response: The potential for a marine mammal strike by seismic vessels and support vessels is exceedingly small. As mentioned previously, OBC surveys do not employ hydrophone arrays, therefore, injury or death by arrays will not occur. Because: (1) few, if any, marine mammals are expected in the area during the time of the survey, (2) the vessels are underway at low speeds while laying or pulling OBC cable or conducting surveys, and (3) documented observations indicate that bowhead and gray whales avoid active seismic survey areas, a whale strike is not likely to occur. If a whale strike occurred, NMFS would investigate the incident and take appropriate action.

Comment 3: The MMC recommends that NMFS and the applicant ensure that the observers will be able to see marine mammals within the designated safety radii around the airgun whenever the arrays are operating.

Response: Observers will monitor the safety zones and zones of potential harassment around the source whenever visibility permits. Harassment assessments will be made based upon percentage of time spent observing in relation to total time for seismic operations. For the reasons provided in comment 2 above, few, if any, marine mammals are expected to approach the vessel and therefore, terminating surveys at night and during inclement weather is not warranted.

Consultation

Under section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, NMFS has completed consultation on the issuance of this authorization.

National Environmental Policy Act

In conjunction with the proposed notice, NMFS released an EA that addressed (1) the impacts on the human environment from issuance of the authorization, and (2) the alternatives to the proposed action. The EA also determined that the issuance of an Incidental Harassment Authorization would not have a significant impact on the human environment. No comments were received on the EA during the comment period, and, as a result, NMFS has issued a Finding of No Significant Impact for the issuance of an Incidental Harassment Authorization to BPXA. A copy of the EA is available upon request (see **ADDRESSES**).

Conclusions

NMFS has determined that the short-term impact of conducting seismic surveys in and near the Northstar Unit

of the Beaufort Sea will result, at worst, in a temporary modification in behavior by certain species of cetaceans. While behavioral modifications may be made by these species of cetaceans to avoid the resultant noise, this behavioral change is expected to have a negligible impact on the animals.

The number of potential incidental harassment takes will depend on the distribution and abundance of marine mammals (which vary annually due to variable ice conditions and other factors) in the area of seismic operations. Due to the distribution and abundance of marine mammals during the projected period of activity and the location of the proposed seismic activity in waters generally too shallow and distant from the edge of the pack ice for most marine mammals of concern, the number of potential harassment takings is estimated to be small. In addition, no take by injury and/or death is anticipated, and the potential for temporary or permanent hearing impairment will be avoided through incorporation of the mitigation measures described in the authorization.

Because bowhead whales are east of the seismic area in the Canadian Beaufort Sea until late August/early September, seismic activities are not expected to impact subsistence hunting of bowhead whales prior to that date. After September 1, 1996, BPXA will initiate aerial survey flights for bowhead whale assessments. Appropriate mitigation measures to avoid an unmitigable adverse impact on the availability of bowhead whales for subsistence needs was the subject of consultation between BPXA and subsistence users. As a result of discussions between the two parties, a Plan of Cooperation has been concluded. This Plan consists of three main components: (1) Communications, (2) conflict avoidance, and (3) dispute resolution.

Summer seismic exploration in and near the Northstar Unit has a small potential to influence seal hunting activities by residents of Nuiqsut. However, NMFS believes that because (1) the peak sealing season is during the winter months, (2) the main summer sealing is off the Colville delta (west and inshore of Northstar), and (3) the zone of influence by seismic sources on beluga and seals is fairly small, the Northstar Unit seismic survey will not have an unmitigable adverse impact on the availability of these stocks for subsistence uses.

Since NMFS is assured that the taking will not result in more than the incidental harassment (as defined by the MMPA Amendments of 1994) of small

numbers of certain species of marine mammals, would have only a negligible impact on these stocks, will not have an unmitigable adverse impact on the availability of these stocks for subsistence uses, and would result in the least practicable impact on the stocks, NMFS has determined that the requirements of section 101(a)(5)(D) have been met and the authorization can be issued.

Authorization

Accordingly, NMFS has issued an incidental harassment authorization to BPXA for the above described seismic survey during the 1996 open water season provided the mitigation, monitoring and reporting requirements described in the authorization are undertaken.

Dated: July 18, 1996.

Patricia A. Montanio,
Acting Director, Office of Protected Resources,
National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 96-18896 Filed 7-24-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-F

[I.D. 071596D]

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council; Meetings

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

ACTION: Notice of public meetings.

SUMMARY: The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) and their Coastal Migratory Committee with Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's (ASMFC) Bluefish Board, Atlantic Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish Committee (with Monitoring Committee and Advisors), and Law Enforcement Committee will hold public meetings.

DATES: The meetings will be held on August 6-8, 1996.

ADDRESSES: The meetings will be held at the Holiday Inn, 700 King Street, Wilmington, DE 19801; telephone: 302-655-0400 or 1-800-HOLIDAY.

Council address: Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, 300 S. New Street, Dover, DE 19901; telephone: 302-674-2331.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: David R. Keifer, Executive Director; telephone: 302-674-2331.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

August 6, 1996, from 8:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m., the Coastal Migratory Committee and ASMFC Bluefish Board will meet.

August 6, 1996, from 10:00 a.m. until noon, the Atlantic Mackerel, Squid, and

Butterfish Monitoring Committee will meet. August 6, 1996, from 2:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m., the Coastal Migratory Committee will meet as a Council Committee Of The Whole with the ASMFC Bluefish Board.

August 7, 1996, from 8:00 a.m. until 9:30 a.m., the Council will meet at which time there will be a Stock Assessment Workshop.

August 7, 1996, from 1:30 p.m. until 4:30 p.m., the Atlantic Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish Committee will meet as a Council Committee Of The Whole with Advisors.

August 7, 1996, from 4:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m., the Law Enforcement Committee will meet.

August 8, 1996, from 8:00 a.m. until approximately 1:30 p.m., the Council will meet.

The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the Bluefish Fishery Management Plan (FMP) Amendment 1, the 1997 bluefish management measures, review comments and recommendations for adoption of Amendment 6 and discuss 1997 specifications to the Atlantic Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish FMP, discuss filleting of fish at sea. Further, the Council will discuss and may adopt for public hearing purposes a regulatory amendment to the Scup FMP, and will consider and may adopt a resubmittal of the disapproved quota provision of the Black Sea Bass FMP.

Special Accommodations

These meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Joanna Davis at the Council (see ADDRESSES) at least 5 days prior to the meeting dates.

Dated: July 19, 1996.

Richard W. Surdi,

Acting Director, Office of Fisheries Conservation and Management, National Marine Fisheries Service.

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COMMITTEE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TEXTILE AGREEMENTS

Adjustment of Guaranteed Access Levels for Certain Cotton, Wool and Man-Made Fiber Textile Products Produced or Manufactured in the Dominican Republic

July 19, 1996.

AGENCY: Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements (CITA).