

ACTION: Notice; receipt of application for permit amendment.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G), Division of Wildlife Conservation, Juneau, AK, (Principal Investigator: Michael Rehberg), has applied in due form for a permit to take marine mammals for purposes of scientific research in Alaska.

DATES: Written, telefaxed, or email comments must be received on or before May 9, 2014.

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. 18537 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. in the subject line of the email comment.

Those individuals requesting a public hearing should submit a written request to the Chief, Permits, Conservation and Education 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: Tammy Adams or Courtney Smith, (301) 427-8401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The subject permit is requested 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 (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.*).

This application supports continuation of ADF&G's long-term Steller sea lion (SSL) research program. The applicant requests takes during research activities that incorporate

improved methodology based on previous work authorized under permit No. 14325 and subsequent modifications, including: incidental disturbance during aerial, skiff- and ground-based count and brand resight surveys; captures supporting marking, external instrument attachment, and physiology, toxicology, feeding ecology and health sampling; and permanent marking of pups and older age classes for describing vital rates and intra-/inter-Discrete Population Segment (DPS) movement. The applicant also requests takes by incidental disturbance of northern fur seals (*Callorhinus ursinus*), California sea lions (*Zalophus californianus*), and harbor (*Phoca vitulina*), spotted (*Phoca largha*), ribbon (*Histiophoca fasciata*), ringed (*Pusa hispida*) and bearded seals (*Erignathus barbatus*) are also requested due to proximity of isolated individuals to the study area. See tables in permit application for numbers of takes by species, stock and activity.

Authorization for annual unintentional mortality of 5 SSL from the Western DPS and 10 SSL from the Eastern DPS is requested.

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 effects of the activities proposed are consistent with the Preferred Alternative in the Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for Steller Sea Lion and Northern Fur Seal Research (NMFS 2007) and that issuance of the permit would not have a significant adverse impact on the human environment.

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

Dated: April 3, 2014.

Tammy C. Adams,

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

[FR Doc. 2014-07844 Filed 4-8-14; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XV92

Marine Mammals; File No. 14610

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

Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice; receipt of application for permit amendment.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G), Division of Wildlife Conservation, Juneau, AK (Principal Investigator: Lori Quakenbush), has applied for an amendment to Scientific Research Permit No. 14610-02.

DATES: Written, telefaxed, or email comments must be received on or before May 9, 2014.

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. 14450-01 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. 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: Tammy Adams or Courtney Smith, (301) 427-8401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The subject amendment to Permit No. 14610-02 is requested 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 (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).

On April 20, 2010, notice was published in the **Federal Register** (75 FR 20565) that a request for a permit to conduct research on beluga whales

(*Delphinapterus leucas*), endangered bowhead whales (*Balaena mysticetus*), gray whales (*Eschrichtius robustus*), and endangered humpback whales (*Megaptera novaeangliae*) had been submitted by the above-named applicant. The requested permit was issued on May 21, 2010 (75 FR 30383) for the beluga whale and gray whale projects under the authority of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended (MMPA; 16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*), and the regulations governing the taking and importing of marine mammals (50 CFR part 216). A decision on the bowhead whale and humpback whale projects was deferred pending completion of consultation under section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).

An amended permit (No. 14610-01) was issued on August 3, 2010 (75 CFR 50748) under the authority of the MMPA, the regulations governing the taking and importing of marine mammals, the ESA, and the regulations governing the taking, importing, and exporting of endangered and threatened species (50 CFR parts 222-226) to include remote biopsy and instrument attachment for bowhead and humpback whales. The amended permit is valid through the expiration date of the original permit, May 31, 2015.

The permit holder is requesting the permit be amended to include authorization for takes during photo-identification efforts to determine stock or feeding group affiliation of gray whales encountered in Alaskan waters (Chukchi and western Beaufort seas). Photo-identification, in addition to currently authorized tagging and biopsy efforts, will allow larger sample sizes to increase knowledge of gray whale movements, habitat use, and behavior relative to industrial activities including oil and gas and shipping in the Arctic. The permit holder is requesting to take up to 300 gray whales per year by harassment during photo-identification efforts, including opportunistic encounters during tagging and biopsy activities, and increase incidental harassment of gray whales by 50 per year. The permit holder is also requesting to alter a current tag attachment method to allow for the attachment of a temporary acoustic tag using a two-anchor system on bowhead whales. This request is to allow for two much shorter anchors with one set of barbs each to be used for the short-term attachment of a base-plate for a temporary acoustic tag. The two anchor attachment is similar to that used by the LIMPET tag that has been used successfully on 13 species of whales. No

additional takes are requested for tagging activities. The expiration date of the permit would not change.

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 potential environmental impacts of the proposed activity are consistent with the effects in the Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact prepared for issuance of a prior version of the permit.

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

Dated: April 4, 2014.

Tammy C. Adams,

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

[FR Doc. 2014-07956 Filed 4-8-14; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XD141

Takes of Marine Mammals Incidental to Specified Activities; Marine Geophysical Survey in the Northwest Atlantic Ocean Offshore New Jersey, May to August 2014

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

ACTION: Notice; proposed incidental harassment authorization; extension of comment period.

SUMMARY: On March 17, 2014, NMFS announced notice of a proposed issuance of an Incidental Harassment Authorization (Authorization) to the Lamont Doherty Earth Observatory in collaboration with the National Science Foundation, to take marine mammals, by harassment incidental to conducting a marine geophysical (seismic) survey in the northwest Atlantic Ocean May through August, 2014. The **Federal Register** notice indicated that written comments were due by April 16, 2014. However, in response to a request to extend the public comment period, NMFS has decided to extend the public comment period by an additional 30 calendar days.

DATES: NMFS has extended the public comment period for this action from

April 16 to May 16, 2014. NMFS must receive written comments and information on or before May 16, 2014.

ADDRESSES: Address comments on the application to Jolie Harrison, Supervisor, Incidental Take Program, 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.Cody@noaa.gov. Please include 0648-XD141 in the subject line. Comments sent via email to ITP.Cody@noaa.gov, 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.htm#applications> 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.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Jeannine Cody, NMFS, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS (301) 427-8401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 101(a)(5)(D) of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended (MMPA; 16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*) directs 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.

On March 17, 2014, NMFS published a **Federal Register** notice (79 FR 14779, March 17, 2014) announcing proposed issuance of an Authorization to the Lamont Doherty Earth Observatory to take marine mammals, by harassment incidental to conducting a seismic survey in the northwest Atlantic Ocean May through August, 2014. The 30-day public comment period for the **Federal Register** notice (79 FR 14779, March 17, 2014) ends on April 16, 2014.

This is the first time that NMFS has proposed to issue an Authorization for harassment incidental to a scientific