

- The intensity of anticipated takes by Level B harassment is relatively low for all stocks. Level B harassment will be primarily in the form of behavioral disturbance, resulting in avoidance of the project areas around where impact or vibratory pile driving is occurring, with some low-level TTS that may limit the detection of acoustic cues for relatively brief amounts of time in relatively confined footprints of the activities;

- Nearby areas of similar habitat value (e.g., transit and haul out habitats) within and outside of Narragansett Bay are available for marine mammals that may temporarily vacate the project area during construction activities;

- The specified activity and associated ensonified areas do not include habitat areas known to be of special significance (BIAs or ESA-designated critical habitat);

- Effects on species that serve as prey for marine mammals from the activities are expected to be short-term and, therefore, any associated impacts on marine mammal feeding are not expected to result in significant or long-term consequences for individuals, or to accrue to adverse impacts on their populations;

- The ensonified areas are very small relative to the overall habitat ranges of all species and stocks, and will not adversely affect ESA-designated critical habitat for any species or any areas of known biological importance;

- The lack of anticipated significant or long-term negative effects to marine mammal habitat; and

- The efficacy of the mitigation measures in reducing the effects of the specified activities on all species and 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 monitoring and mitigation measures, NMFS finds that the total marine mammal take from the planned activity will have a negligible impact on all affected marine mammal species or stocks.

Small Numbers

As noted above, only small numbers of incidental take may be authorized under sections 101(a)(5)(A) and (D) of the MMPA for specified activities other than military readiness activities. The MMPA does not define small numbers and so, in practice, where estimated numbers are available, NMFS compares the number of individuals taken to the most appropriate estimation of abundance of the relevant species or

stock in our determination of whether an authorization is limited to small numbers of marine mammals. When the predicted number of individuals to be taken is fewer than one-third of the species or stock abundance, the take is considered to be of small numbers. Additionally, other qualitative factors may be considered in the analysis, such as the temporal or spatial scale of the activities.

The instances of take NMFS proposes to authorize is below one-third of the estimated stock abundance for all impacted stocks (Table 12). (In fact, take of individuals is less than 4 percent of the abundance for all affected stocks.) The number of animals that we are authorizing to be taken is considered small relative to the relevant stocks or populations, even if each estimated take occurred to a new individual. Furthermore, these takes are likely to only occur within a small portion of the each stock's range and the likelihood that each take will occur to a new individual is low.

Based on the analysis contained herein of the planned activity (including the mitigation and monitoring measures) and the anticipated take of marine mammals, NMFS finds that small numbers of marine mammals will be taken relative to the population size of the affected species or stocks.

Unmitigable Adverse Impact Analysis and Determination

There are no relevant subsistence uses of the affected marine mammal stocks or species implicated by this action. Therefore, NMFS has determined that the total taking of affected species or stocks will not have an unmitigable adverse impact on the availability of such species or stocks for taking for subsistence purposes.

Endangered Species Act

Section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA: 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) requires that each Federal agency insure that any action it authorizes, funds, or carries out is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of any endangered or threatened species or result in the destruction or adverse modification of designated critical habitat. To ensure ESA compliance for the issuance of IHAs, NMFS consults internally whenever we propose to authorize take for endangered or threatened species.

No incidental take of ESA-listed species is authorized or expected to result from this activity. Therefore, NMFS has determined that formal consultation under section 7 of the ESA is not required for this action.

National Environmental Policy Act

To comply with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA; 42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*) and NOAA Administrative Order (NAO) 216-6A, NMFS must review our proposed action (*i.e.*, the issuance of an IHA) with respect to potential impacts on the human environment.

This action is consistent with categories of activities identified in Categorical Exclusion B4 (IHAs with no anticipated serious injury or mortality) of the Companion Manual for NOAA Administrative Order 216-6A, which do not individually or cumulatively have the potential for significant impacts on the quality of the human environment and for which we have not identified any extraordinary circumstances that would preclude this categorical exclusion. Accordingly, NMFS has determined that the issuance of the IHA qualifies to be categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

Authorization

NMFS has issued an IHA to OMAO for the potential harassment of small numbers of seven marine mammal species incidental to construction activities at Naval Station Newport, in Newport, RI, provided the previously mentioned mitigation, monitoring, and reporting requirements are followed.

Dated: December 15, 2022.

Kimberly Damon-Randall,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648-XV189]

Space Weather Advisory Group Meeting

AGENCY: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: The Space Weather Advisory Group (SWAG) will meet for 2 and a half-days on January 18–20, 2023.

DATES: The meeting is scheduled as follows: January 18–19, 2023 from 9 a.m.–5 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST) and January 20, 2023 from 9 a.m.–12 p.m. EST.

ADDRESSES: The public meeting will be a hybrid event with the SWAG and invited guests convening “in person” at

the Herbert C. Hoover Building, 1401 Constitution Avenue NW, Washington, DC, and any public participants attending virtually via Webinar. For details on how to connect to the webinar or to submit comments, please visit www.weather.gov/swag or contact Jennifer Meehan, National Weather Service; telephone: 301-427-9798; email: jennifer.meehan@noaa.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Jennifer Meehan, National Weather Service, NOAA, 1325 East West Highway, Silver Spring, Maryland, 20910; 301-427-9798 or jennifer.meehan@noaa.gov; or visit the SWAG website: <https://www.weather.gov/swag>.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Pursuant to the Promoting Research and Observations of Space Weather to Improve the Forecasting of Tomorrow (PROSWIFT) Act, 51 U.S.C. 60601 *et seq.*, the Administrator of NOAA and the National Science and Technology Council's Space Weather Operations, Research, and Mitigation (SWORM) Subcommittee established the Space Weather Advisory Group (SWAG) on April 21, 2021. The SWAG is the only Federal Advisory SWAG that advises and informs the interest and work of the SWORM. The SWAG is to receive advice from the academic community, the commercial space weather sector, and nongovernmental space weather end users to carry out the responsibilities of the SWAG set forth in the PROSWIFT Act, 51 U.S.C. 60601 *et seq.*

The SWAG is directed to advise the SWORM on the following: facilitating advances in the space weather enterprise of the United States; improving the ability of the United States to prepare for, mitigate, respond to, and recover from space weather phenomena; enabling the coordination and facilitation of research to operations and operations to research, as described in section 60604(d) of title 51, United States Code; and developing and implementing the integrated strategy under 51 U.S.C. 60601(c), including subsequent updates and reevaluations. The SWAG shall also conduct a comprehensive survey of the needs of users of space weather products to identify the space weather research, observations, forecasting, prediction, and modeling advances required to improve space weather products, as required by 51 U.S.C. 60601(d)(3).

Matters To Be Considered

The meeting will be open to the public. During the meeting, the SWAG will discuss the PROSWIFT Act, 51

U.S.C. 60601 *et seq.*, directed duties of the SWAG including the required 51 U.S.C. 60601(d)(3) user survey, and the update to the 2019 National Space Weather Strategy and Action Plan (<https://tinyurl.com/NSWSAP2019>) Implementation Plan. The full agenda and meeting materials will be published on the SWAG website: <https://www.weather.gov/swag>.

Additional Information and Public Comments

The meeting will be held over two and a half-days and will be conducted in a hybrid manner (for meeting details see **ADDRESSES**). Please register for the meeting through the website: <https://www.weather.gov/swag>.

This event is accessible to individuals with disabilities. For all other special accommodation requests, please contact jennifer.meehan@noaa.gov. This webinar is a NOAA public meeting and will be recorded and transcribed. If you have a public comment, you acknowledge you will be recorded and are aware you can opt out of the meeting. Participation in the meeting constitutes consent to the recording. Both the meeting minutes and presentations will be posted to the SWAG website (<https://www.weather.gov/swag>). The agenda, speakers and times are subject to change. For updates, please check the SWAG website (<https://www.weather.gov/swag>).

Public comments directed to the SWAG members and SWAG related topics are encouraged. In particular, the SWAG would like to hear from all interested parties on what the SWAG should consider advising the SWORM on in regard to the 2019 National Space Weather Strategy and Action Plan (<https://tinyurl.com/NSWSAP2019>) Implementation Plan update. For example, the SWAG seeks input from the public on the following:

1. In priority order, how, where, and why should the Federal Government invest limited resources to enhance research, technology, and innovation to improve observations and understanding of space weather events?

2. In priority order, what activities should the Federal Government undertake to enhance national capabilities to prepare for, recover from, adapt to, or otherwise mitigate the effects of space weather events?

3. What innovative tools, platforms, or technologies are needed by the Federal Government and space weather research and development communities to advance the transition of research to operations for models and observations of space weather phenomena? Please

include any barriers to implement the identified tools, platforms, or technologies.

4. In priority order, what opportunities exist to enhance U.S. operational space weather predictions, alerts, and services, for Earth, near-Earth, and deep space applications? Please include any barriers for implementation and utilization of these capabilities.

5. Beyond regulation and grant programs, what can the Federal government do to enable and advance the private sector role for capabilities, forecasting, modeling, mitigation, research, development, and observation in the space weather domain?

6. What opportunities exist for the United States to marshal the collective resources of like-minded nations and organizations to address the global hazard of space weather?

7. Is there any additional information related to enhancing national capabilities to address space weather events, not listed above, that you believe the SWAG should consider?

The public input provided will inform the work of the SWAG as it works with the SWORM to develop the updated National Space Weather Strategy and Action Plan Implementation Plan. Individuals or groups who would like to submit recommendations to the SWAG will be given two minutes to present one slide. Please email the request to speak and the slide to jennifer.meehan@noaa.gov by January 13, 2023 to provide sufficient time for SWAG review.

For other written public comments, please email jennifer.meehan@noaa.gov by January 13, 2023. Written comments received after this date will be distributed to the SWAG but may not be reviewed prior to the meeting date. As time allows, public comments will be read into the public record during the meeting. Advance comments will be collated and posted to the meeting website.

Dated: December 16, 2022.

Michael Farrar,

Director, National Centers for Environmental Prediction, National Weather Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

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