

structures that fish can pass over or through, and support a region-wide program of road maintenance and other forest management activities in the vicinity of streams. Confirming which streams currently support ESA-listed fish species would help prioritize those locations for restoration actions.

Juvenile salmonids would be collected via backpack electrofishing, handled (anesthetized, weighed, measured, identified, and checked for marks or tags), and released back to the waters from which they came. In some cases, the researchers may not actually capture any fish but would merely note their presence, however electrofishing where listed species are observed would still be reported as take. The researchers are not proposing to kill any of the listed fish being taken, but a small number may be killed as an inadvertent result of these activities.

#### Permit 27212

Oregon State University is seeking a new permit to survey waters across the Pacific Northwest with the intent of mapping sculpin diversity and distribution across that range. The permit would authorize them to take juvenile PS Chinook salmon and steelhead; HCS chum salmon; UCR steelhead and spring-run Chinook salmon; MCR steelhead; SnkR steelhead, sockeye, and spring/summer-run and fall-run Chinook salmon; LCR Chinook salmon, coho salmon and steelhead; UWR Chinook salmon; CR chum salmon; and SDPS eulachon. The purpose of the study is to map sculpin diversity and distribution, but it would also benefit listed salmonids. Improved data on the listed species' distribution, movement, and life histories would help direct the efforts recommended in each of the species' recovery plans. Moreover, the project would generate presence/absence data to help fill the need to monitor ecosystem health and the distribution, population status, and migratory movements of all the of listed species that may be encountered.

The fish would be collected via backpack electrofishing and beach seine; with the exception of SDPS eulachon, no adults would be taken. All captured listed fish would be handled briefly (identified and recorded) and immediately released back to the stream of their origin. The researchers would reduce possible harm to listed salmonids by: (1) avoiding sampling in the heat of the day or during spawning times, (2) surveying sample plots in advance for any listed fish, (3) using the lowest feasible settings on the electroshocker, (4) using the gentler seine net when possible, and (5)

consulting with district biologists to get their advice on how to minimize harm to endangered and threatened species at each site. The researchers are not proposing to kill any listed fish, but a small number of each species may be killed as an inadvertent result of the proposed activities.

This notice is provided pursuant to section 10(c) of the ESA. NMFS will evaluate the applications, associated documents, and comments submitted to determine whether the applications meet the requirements of section 10(a) of the ESA and Federal regulations. The final permit decisions will not be made until after the end of the 30-day comment period. NMFS will publish notice of its final action in the **Federal Register**.

Dated: February 13, 2023.

**Angela Somma,**

*Chief, Endangered Species Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.*

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**BILLING CODE 3510-22-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648-XC783]

#### Marine Mammals; File No. 27225

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

**ACTION:** Notice; receipt of application.

**SUMMARY:** Notice is hereby given that the Sea Research Foundation, Inc. dba Mystic Aquarium, 55 Coogan Boulevard, Mystic, CT 06355 (Responsible Party: Katie Cubina), has applied in due form for a permit to collect, receive, import, and export marine mammal parts for scientific research.

**DATES:** Written, telefaxed, or email comments must be received on or before March 20, 2023.

**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 (APPS) home page, <https://apps.nmfs.noaa.gov>, and then selecting File No. 27225 from the list of available applications. These documents are also available upon written request via email to [NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov](mailto:NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov).

Written comments on this application should be submitted via email to

[NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov](mailto:NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov). Please include File No. 27225 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](mailto: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:

Jennifer Skidmore or Shasta McClenahan, Ph.D., (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 proposes to collect, receive, import, and export parts from a maximum of 5,000 cetaceans and 5,000 pinnipeds (except walrus) annually. Sources of foreign and domestic parts may include subsistence harvests, captive animals, other authorized researchers or curated collections, bycatch from legal commercial fishing operations, and foreign stranded animals. Samples would be analyzed for research related to marine mammal health (e.g., neuroimmunology, microbiomes and diving physiology), including the creation and use of cell lines. The permit would be valid for 5 years from the date of issuance.

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: February 13, 2023.

**Julia M. Harrison,**

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

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**BILLING CODE 3510-22-P**