

approval by the Secretary of Commerce (Secretary). The North Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) prepared and the Secretary approved the FMP for Groundfish of the GOA in 1978 and the FMP for the Groundfish Fishery of the BSAI in 1981. Both FMPs have been amended numerous times.

Amendments 83 and 75 revise the FMPs by (1) updating harvest, ecosystem, and socioeconomic information, (2) consolidating text, and (3) reorganizing the documents. These revisions update information in the FMPs and make them easier to read.

Amendments 83 and 75 also revise the harvest specifications process set forth in the FMPs to be consistent with Amendments 81 and 74 to the groundfish FMPs (69 FR 31091, June 2, 2004). Amendments 81 and 74 were approved by the Secretary on August 23, 2004, and added new policy objectives to the FMPs, including the objective to adopt conservative harvest levels for multi-species and single species fisheries. Amendments 83 and 75 revise the FMPs' description of the harvest specifications process by requiring total allowable catch for species or species groups to be set equal to or less than the acceptable biological catch. This revision ensures that harvest levels are conservative and consistent with the FMP management policy and objectives to prevent overfishing.

Response to Comments

A notice of availability (NOA) for Amendments 83 and 75 to the FMPs, which described the proposed amendments and invited comments from the public, was published in the **Federal Register** on March 24, 2005, (70 FR 15067). The comment period ended May 23, 2005. NMFS received one comment which is summarized and responded to below.

Comment: Insufficient information is provided in the NOA. This proposed action should be republished with more explanation.

Response: The NOA provided a description of the action and several methods of receiving more detailed information. As explained in the NOA, the action is primarily housekeeping revisions that do not substantively change the FMPs. The only substantive change is the limitation on setting total allowable catch, which was explained in detail in the NOA.

The intent of a NOA is to provide the public with notice of a pending decision by the Secretary and to allow for prior public review and comment. The details of proposed FMP amendments are readily available, if more information is needed beyond that provided in the

NOA. Because the action was described in enough detail in the NOA to allow the public to understand the nature of the action and additional information was available by mail, phone, NMFS Alaska Region website, and NMFS staff contacts listed in the NOA, the NOA was sufficient to notify the public of the proposed action and to allow for public comments. Therefore, no additional **Federal Register** notice is needed for this action.

Dated: June 14, 2005.

Anne M. Lange

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

[I.D. 052605A]

Marine Mammals and Endangered Species; National Marine Fisheries Service File No. 1008-1637; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service File No. MA100875

AGENCIES: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Receipt of application.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that John Wise, Ph.D., Maine Center for Toxicology and Environmental Health, University of Southern Maine, P.O. Box 9300, Portland, ME 04104, has applied in due form for an amendment to Permit No. 1008-1637-01.

DATES: Written, telefaxed, or e-mail comments must be received on or before July 20, 2005.

ADDRESSES: The application and related documents are available for review upon written request or by appointment (See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**).

Written comments or requests for a public hearing on this application should be mailed to the Chief, Permits, Conservation and Education Division, F/PR1, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 13705, Silver Spring, MD 20910. Those individuals requesting a hearing should set forth the specific reasons why a hearing on this particular request would be appropriate.

Comments may also be submitted by facsimile at (301) 427-2521, provided the facsimile is confirmed by hard copy submitted by mail and postmarked no later than the closing date of the comment period.

Comments may also be submitted by e-mail. The mailbox address for providing email comments is *NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov*. Include in the subject line of the e-mail comment the following document identifier: File No. 1008-1637/MA100875.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Amy Sloan or Jennifer Skidmore, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, (301) 713-2289.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The subject permit amendment 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 parts 18 and 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 17 and 222-226).

Permit No. 1008-1637-01 authorizes Dr. Wise to receive and import and export (to and from Canada) hard and soft parts from all marine mammal species under NMFS jurisdiction for purposes of developing cell lines to determine tissue levels of metals in marine mammal species and to establish a national resource of cell lines for use as model systems in the investigation of various factors related to marine mammal health (e.g., toxicity of metals, virology, etc.). The cell lines may not be sold for profit or used for commercial purposes. Marine mammal parts may be obtained and cell lines developed from the following sources: import from stranded dead marine mammals collected as part of government-authorized marine mammal stranding response operations along the coast of British Columbia, Canada; stranded dead marine mammals in the United States (U.S.); marine mammals that have died during rehabilitation efforts in the U.S.; animals killed during subsistence harvests; soft parts that are discharged naturally by a living threatened or endangered species in the wild; animals that died incidental to commercial fishing if such taking is legal, or other legal operations of the U.S. and Canada; and specimens collected during permitted research activities in the U.S. Exports to Canada of such parts or cell lines are authorized.

The applicant requests authorization to (1) import and export parts and cell lines worldwide; and (2) add USFWS species to the permit, including walrus (*Odobenus rosmarus*), polar bear (*Ursus maritimus*), northern sea otter (*Enhydra lutris lutris*), southern sea otter (*Enhydra lutris nereis*), marine otter (*Lontra felina*), dugong (*Dugong dugon*), West Indian manatee (*Trichechus manatus*), Amazonian manatee (*Trichechus inunguis*), and West African manatee (*Trichechus senegalensis*). The applicant requests a 5-year amendment.

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 this application to the Marine Mammal Commission and its Committee of Scientific Advisors.

Documents may be reviewed in the following locations:

Permits, Conservation and Education Division, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 13705, Silver Spring, MD 20910; phone (301) 713-2289; fax (301) 427-2521;

Northwest Region, NMFS, 7600 Sand Point Way NE, BIN C15700, Bldg. 1, Seattle, WA 98115-0700; phone (206) 526-6150; fax (206) 526-6426;

Alaska Region, NMFS, P.O. Box 21668, Juneau, AK 99802-1668; phone (907) 586-7221; fax (907) 586-7249;

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

Pacific Islands Region, NMFS, 1601 Kapiolani Blvd., Rm 1110, Honolulu, HI 96814-4700; phone (808) 973-2935; fax (808) 973-2941;

Northeast Region, NMFS, One Blackburn Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930-2298; phone (978) 281-9200; fax (978) 281-9371;

Southeast Region, NMFS, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, FL 33701; phone (727) 824-5312; fax (727) 824-5309; and

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Management Authority, 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Room 700, Arlington, VA 22203 (1-800-358-2104).

Dated: June 14, 2005.

Stephen L. Leathery,

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

Dated: June 14, 2005.

Charlie R. Chandler,

Chief, Branch of Permits, Division of Management Authority, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 040705B]

Notice of Availability of Final Stock Assessment Reports

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

ACTION: Notice of availability; response to comments.

SUMMARY: NMFS has incorporated public comments into revisions of marine mammal stock assessment reports (SARs) and the guidelines for preparing marine mammal stock assessment reports. The 2004 final SARs and the revised guidelines are now complete and available to the public.

ADDRESSES: Send requests for copies of reports or revised guidelines to: Chief, Marine Mammal Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910-3226, Attn: Stock Assessments. Copies of the Pacific Regional SARs may be requested from Cathy Campbell, Southwest Regional Office, NMFS, 501 West Ocean Boulevard, Long Beach, CA 90802-4213.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Tom Eagle, Office of Protected Resources, 301-713-2322, ext. 105, e-mail Tom.Eagle@noaa.gov or Cathy Campbell, 562-980-4060, email Cathy.E.Campbell@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Electronic Access

Stock assessment reports and the revised guidelines for preparing them are available via the Internet at http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/PR2/Stock_Assessment_Program/sars.html.

Background

Section 117 of the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*) requires NMFS and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to prepare stock assessments for each stock of marine mammals occurring in waters under the jurisdiction of the United States. These reports must contain information regarding the distribution and abundance of the stock, population growth rates and trends, estimates of annual human-caused mortality and serious injury from all sources, descriptions of the fisheries with which the stock interacts, and the status of the stock. Initial reports were completed in 1995.

The MMPA requires NMFS and FWS to review the SARs at least annually for strategic stocks and stocks for which significant new information is available, and at least once every 3 years for non-strategic stocks. NMFS and the FWS are required to revise a SAR if the status of the stock has changed or can be more accurately determined. NMFS, in conjunction with the Alaska, Atlantic, and Pacific Scientific Review Groups (SRGs), reviewed the status of marine mammal stocks as required and revised reports in the Pacific region.

The SARs in the Alaska and Atlantic regions were reviewed along with new information on these stocks of marine mammals. Although new abundance or mortality estimates were available for some stocks in these regions, the status of no stocks in these regions would be changed. Furthermore, NMFS could not determine the status of marine mammal stocks in the Alaska or Atlantic regions with substantially improved accuracy. Completion of the draft 2004 reports was delayed due to several factors, and the draft 2005 reports are now being completed. Therefore, the reports in these two regions were not revised, and updated information will be included in the 2005 reports.

NMFS convened a workshop in June 1994, including representatives from NMFS, FWS, and the Marine Mammal Commission (Commission), to prepare draft guidelines for preparing SARs. The report of this workshop (Barlow *et al.*, 1995) included the guidelines for preparing SARs and a summary of the discussions upon which the guidelines were based. The draft guidelines were made available, along with the initial draft SARs, for public review and comment (59 FR 40527, August 9, 1995).

In 1996, NMFS convened a second workshop to review the guidelines and to recommend changes, if appropriate, to them. Workshop participants included representatives from NMFS,