

NMFS finds that the total marine mammal take from the activity will have a negligible impact on all affected marine mammal species or stocks.

Small Numbers

As noted previously, only take of small numbers of marine mammals 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.

NMFS authorizes incidental take by Level B harassment only of 15 marine mammal species with 16 managed stocks. The total amount of takes authorized relative to the best available population abundance is less than 5 percent for 15 stocks and 25 percent for the remaining stock (Western North Atlantic Migratory Coastal Stock of Bottlenose dolphins) (Table 5). The take numbers authorized are considered conservative estimates for purposes of the small numbers determination as they assume all takes represent different individual animals, which is unlikely to be the case.

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 would 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 would 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.

NMFS Office of Protected Resources (OPR) has authorized take of four species of marine mammals which are listed under the ESA, including the North Atlantic right, fin, sei, and sperm whale, and has determined that these activities fall within the scope of activities analyzed in NMFS Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office's (GARFO) programmatic consultation regarding geophysical surveys along the U.S. Atlantic coast in the three Atlantic Renewable Energy Regions (completed June 29, 2021; revised September 2021).

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

As a result of these determinations, NMFS has issued an IHA to BPW for conducting marine site characterization surveys in coastal waters off of New York and New Jersey in the New York Bight for a period of 1 year, provided the previously mentioned mitigation, monitoring, and reporting requirements are incorporated. The IHA can be found at: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/action/incidental-take-authorization->

bluepoint-wind-llc-marine-site-characterization-surveys-new.

Dated: February 28, 2023.

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-XC812]

New England Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice of a public meeting.

SUMMARY: The New England Fishery Management Council (Council) is scheduling a public meeting of its Habitat Committee to consider actions affecting New England fisheries in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ). This meeting will be held in-person with a webinar option. Recommendations from this group will be brought to the full Council for formal consideration and action, if appropriate.

DATES: This webinar will be held on Thursday, March 23, 2023, at 9 a.m. Webinar registration URL information: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/5074155331765896027>.

ADDRESSES: This meeting will be held at the Four Points by Sheraton, One Audubon Road, Wakefield, MA 01880; telephone: (781) 245-9300.

Council address: New England Fishery Management Council, 50 Water Street, Mill 2, Newburyport, MA 01950.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Thomas A. Nies, Executive Director, New England Fishery Management Council; telephone: (978) 465-0492.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Agenda

The Committee will discuss and identify a preferred alternative for the Atlantic Salmon Aquaculture Framework. They will also review and recommend revisions, if necessary, to the draft goals and objectives for the Northern Edge Habitat/Scallop Management Framework. The Committee will discuss draft goals and objectives to be discussed by the Scallop Committee on March 29. They also plan to discuss an Exempted Fishing Permit request disapproved by NOAA Fisheries

within the Great South Channel Habitat Management Area, as a follow-up to prior Council review of the final report for an earlier phase of the work. The Committee will also receive updates from Council staff on recent coordination with BOEM and NOAA related to offshore wind leasing in the Gulf of Maine. Other business will be discussed, if necessary.

Although non-emergency issues not contained on the agenda may come before this Council for discussion, those issues may not be the subject of formal action during this meeting. Council action will be restricted to those issues specifically listed in this notice and any issues arising after publication of this notice that require emergency action under section 305(c) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, provided the public has been notified of the Council's intent to take final action to address the emergency. The public also should be aware that the meeting will be recorded. Consistent with 16 U.S.C. 1852, a copy of the recording is available upon request.

Special Accommodations

This meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Thomas A. Nies, Executive Director, at (978) 465-0492, at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: March 1, 2023.

Rey Israel Marquez,

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

[FR Doc. 2023-04516 Filed 3-3-23; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648-XC813]

North Pacific Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice of hybrid meeting.

SUMMARY: The North Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) Salmon Bycatch Committee will meet March 20, 2023 through March 21, 2023.

DATES: The meeting will be held on Monday, March 20, 2023 through Tuesday, March 21, 2023, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Alaska Time.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be a hybrid meeting. Attend in-person at the UAA campus, Gorsuch Commons Room 107, 3700 Sharon Gagnon Lane, Anchorage, AK 99508 or join online through the link at <https://meetings.npfmc.org/Meeting/Details/2980>.

Council address: North Pacific Fishery Management Council, 1007 W 3rd Ave., Anchorage, AK 99501-2252; telephone: (907) 271-2809. Instructions for attending the meeting are given under **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**, below.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Diana Stram, Council staff; phone: (907) 271-2809; email: diana.stram@noaa.gov. For technical support, please contact our administrative staff; email: npfmc.admin@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Agenda

Monday, March 20, 2023, Through Tuesday, March 21, 2023

The agenda will include: (a) introductions; (b) information requested of staff; (c) review of purpose and need statements submitted; (d) review of conceptual alternatives submitted; (e) committee recommendations to the Council; and (f) and other business. The agenda is subject to change, and the latest version will be posted at <https://meetings.npfmc.org/Meeting/Details/2980> prior to the meeting, along with meeting materials.

Connection Information

You can attend the meeting online using a computer, tablet, or smart phone; or by phone only. Connection information will be posted online at: <https://meetings.npfmc.org/Meeting/Details/2980>.

Public Comment

Public comment letters will be accepted and should be submitted electronically to <https://meetings.npfmc.org/Meeting/Details/2980>.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: March 1, 2023.

Rey Israel Marquez,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648-XC795]

Takes of Marine Mammals Incidental to Specified Activities; Taking Marine Mammals Incidental to Ferry Berth Improvements in Tongass Narrows in Ketchikan, Alaska

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

ACTION: Notice; issuance of renewal incidental harassment authorization (IHA).

SUMMARY: In accordance with the regulations implementing the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA), as amended, notification is hereby given that NMFS has issued a renewal IHA to the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT) to incidentally harass marine mammals incidental to ferry berth improvements in Tongass Narrows in Ketchikan, Alaska.

DATES: This renewal IHA is valid from March 5, 2023 through March 4, 2024.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kate Fleming, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, (301) 427-8401. Electronic copies of the original application, renewal request, and supporting documents (including NMFS **Federal Register** notices of the original proposed and final authorizations, and the previous IHA), as well as a list of the references cited in this document, may be obtained online at: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/permit/incidental-take-authorizations-under-marine-mammal-protection-act>. In case of problems accessing these documents, please call the contact listed above.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) prohibits the "take" of marine mammals, with certain exceptions. Sections 101(a)(5)(A) and (D) of the MMPA (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*) direct the Secretary of Commerce (as delegated to NMFS) to allow, upon request, the incidental, but not intentional, taking of small numbers 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, an incidental harassment authorization is issued.