

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 proposed monitoring and mitigation measures, NMFS preliminarily finds that the total marine mammal take from the proposed 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. Additionally, other qualitative factors may be considered in the analysis, such as the temporal or spatial scale of the activities.

The numbers of marine mammals that we propose for authorization to be taken, for all species and stocks, would be small relative to the relevant stocks or populations (less than 6 percent for all species and stocks) as shown in Table 8. Based on the analysis contained herein of the proposed activity (including the proposed mitigation and monitoring measures) and the anticipated take of marine mammals, NMFS preliminarily finds that small numbers of marine mammals will be taken relative to the population size of all 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 (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, in this case with the NMFS Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office (GARFO), whenever we propose to authorize take for endangered or threatened species. Within the Survey Area, fin, sei, humpback, North Atlantic right, and sperm whales are listed as endangered species under the ESA. Under section 7 of the ESA, BOEM consulted with NMFS on commercial wind lease issuance and site assessment activities on the Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New York, and New Jersey Wind Energy Areas. NOAA's GARFO issued a Biological Opinion concluding that these activities may adversely affect but are not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of these marine mammal species. The Biological Opinion can be found online at: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/new-england-mid-atlantic/consultations/section-7-biological-opinions-greater-atlantic-region>. NMFS will conclude the ESA section 7 consultation prior to reaching a determination regarding the proposed issuance of the authorization. If the IHA is issued, the Biological Opinion may be amended to include an incidental take statement for these marine mammal species, as appropriate.

Proposed Authorization

As a result of these preliminary determinations, NMFS proposes to issue an IHA to Ørsted for HRG survey activities effective one year from the date of issuance, provided the previously mentioned mitigation, monitoring, and reporting requirements are incorporated. A draft of the proposed IHA itself is available for review in conjunction with this notice at: www.fisheries.noaa.gov/permit/incidental-take-authorizations-under-marine-mammal-protection-act.

Request for Public Comments

We request comment on our analyses, the proposed authorization, and any other aspect of this Notice of Proposed IHA for Ørsted's proposed activity. We also request at this time comment on the potential Renewal of this proposed IHA as described in the paragraph below. Please include with your comments any supporting data or literature citations to help inform decisions on the request for this IHA or a subsequent Renewal IHA.

On a case-by-case basis, NMFS may issue a one-time one-year Renewal IHA following notice to the public providing an additional 15 days for public comments when (1) up to another year of identical or nearly identical, or nearly identical, activities as described in the

Specified Activities section of this notice is planned or (2) the activities as described in the Specified Activities section of this notice would not be completed by the time the IHA expires and a Renewal would allow for completion of the activities beyond that described in the *Dates and Duration* section of this notice, provided all of the following conditions are met:

- A request for renewal is received no later than 60 days prior to the needed Renewal IHA effective date (recognizing that the Renewal IHA expiration date cannot extend beyond one year from expiration of the initial IHA).

- The request for renewal must include the following:

- (1) An explanation that the activities to be conducted under the requested Renewal IHA are identical to the activities analyzed under the initial IHA, are a subset of the activities, or include changes so minor (*e.g.*, reduction in pile size) that the changes do not affect the previous analyses, mitigation and monitoring requirements, or take estimates (with the exception of reducing the type or amount of take).

- (2) A preliminary monitoring report showing the results of the required monitoring to date and an explanation showing that the monitoring results do not indicate impacts of a scale or nature not previously analyzed or authorized.

- Upon review of the request for Renewal, the status of the affected species or stocks, and any other pertinent information, NMFS determines that there are no more than minor changes in the activities, the mitigation and monitoring measures will remain the same and appropriate, and the findings in the initial IHA remain valid.

Dated: August 5, 2020.

Donna Wieting,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Science Advisory Board

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

ACTION: Notice of public meetings.

SUMMARY: This notice sets forth the schedule and proposed agenda of two meetings of the Science Advisory Board

(SAB). The members will discuss issues outlined in the section on Matters to be considered.

DATES: There are two meetings: the first meeting is scheduled for August 27, 2020, from 3:00 p.m. to 3:45 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time (EDT). The second meeting is scheduled for September 22, 2020, from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time (EDT). These times and the agenda topics described below are subject to change. For the latest agenda please refer to the SAB website: <http://sab.noaa.gov/SABMeetings.aspx>.

ADDRESSES: Due to the current Pandemic both meetings will be held virtually. The link for the webinar registration for the August 27, 2020 meeting may be found here: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/1216984958297330448>. The link for the September 22, 2020 meeting will be posted on the SAB website when available.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Cynthia Decker, Executive Director, SSMC3, Room 11230, 1315 East-West Hwy., Silver Spring, MD 20910; Phone Number: 301-734-1156; Email: Cynthia.Decker@noaa.gov; or visit the SAB website at <http://sab.noaa.gov/SABMeetings.aspx>.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The NOAA Science Advisory Board (SAB) was established by a Decision Memorandum dated September 25, 1997, and is the only Federal Advisory Committee with responsibility to advise the Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere on strategies for research, education, and application of science to operations and information services. SAB activities and advice provide necessary input to ensure that National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) science programs are of the highest quality and provide optimal support to resource management.

Status: The August 27, 2020 meeting will be open to public participation with a 5-minute public comment period at 3:40 p.m. (EDT). The September 22, 2020 meeting will have a 5-minute public comment period at 4:45 p.m. (EDT). The SAB expects that public statements presented at its meetings will not be repetitive of previously submitted verbal or written statements. In general, each individual or group making a verbal presentation will be limited to a total time of three minutes. Written comments for the August 27, 2020 meeting should be received by August 12, 2020 and written comments for the September 22, 2020 meeting

should be received in the SAB Executive Director's Office by September 7, 2020 to provide sufficient time for SAB review. Written comments received by the SAB Executive Director after these dates will be distributed to the SAB, but may not be reviewed prior to the meeting date.

Special Accommodations: These meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for special accommodations may be directed to the Executive Director no later than 12:00 p.m. (EDT).

Matters To Be Considered: The meeting on August 27, 2020 will consider the Precipitation Prediction Grand Challenge report by the Climate Working Group. The September 22, 2020 meeting will consider updates contained in the SAB long-term work plan based on the NOAA Priorities. Meeting materials, including work products, will be made available on the SAB website: <http://sab.noaa.gov/SABMeetings.aspx>.

Dated: August 5, 2020.

Eric Locklear,

*Deputy Chief Financial Officer/
Administrative Officer, Office of Oceanic and
Atmospheric Research, National Oceanic and
Atmospheric Administration.*

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648-XA355]

New England Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: The New England Fishery Management Council (Council) is scheduling a public meeting of its Herring Advisory Panel via webinar to consider actions affecting New England fisheries in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ). 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 Tuesday, August 25, 2020 at 9.30 a.m. Webinar registration URL information: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/4792386764946327823>.

ADDRESSES:

Meeting address: The meeting will be held via webinar.

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 Advisory Panel will review results of the 2020 management track assessment for Atlantic herring. They will also continue development of Framework 8 to the Atlantic Herring Fishery Management Plan and review preliminary analyses. Framework 8 is considering fishery specifications for fishing years 2021-23 and adjusting measures in the herring plan that potentially inhibit the mackerel fishery from achieving optimum yield. Other business will be discussed as 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: August 5, 2020.

Tracey L. Thompson,

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

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