

authority of 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 222–226).

The applicant proposes a five-year scientific research permit characterizing the habitat use, population abundance, reproduction, juvenile recruitment, age and growth, temporal and spatial distribution, diet selectivity, and contaminant load of shortnose sturgeon captured from the Hudson River Estuary from New York Harbor to Troy Dam. Anchored and drift gill nets and trawl nets would be used to capture up to 240 and 2,340 shortnose sturgeon in year one through three and year four and five, respectively. Other research activities would include: measuring, weighing; tagging unmarked individuals with passive integrated transponder tags, and dart tags; and genetic tissue sampling. A first subset of fish would be anesthetized and tagged with acoustic transmitters; a second subset would have fin rays sampled for ageing; and a third subset of fish would be gastrically lavaged for diet analysis, as well as have blood samples taken for contaminant testing. A total of nine unintended mortalities are requested over the life of the permit.

Dated: June 3, 2011.

P. Michael Payne,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648–XA436

Incidental Taking of Marine Mammals; Taking of Marine Mammals Incidental to the Explosive Removal of Offshore Structures in the Gulf of Mexico

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

ACTION: Notice; issuance of letters of authorization.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) and implementing regulations, notification is hereby given that NMFS has issued one-year Letters of Authorization (LOA) to take marine mammals incidental to the explosive removal of offshore oil and gas structures (EROS) in the Gulf of Mexico.

DATES: These authorizations are effective from July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012, and September 3, 2011 through September 2, 2012.

ADDRESSES: The application and LOAs are available for review by writing to P. Michael Payne, Chief, Permits, Conservation, and Education Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910–3235 or by telephoning the contact listed here (see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**), or online at: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/permits/incidental.htm>. Documents cited in this notice may be viewed, by appointment, during regular business hours, at the aforementioned address.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Howard Goldstein or Jolie Harrison, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 301–713–2289.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 101(a)(5)(A) of the MMPA (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*) directs the Secretary of Commerce (who has delegated the authority to NMFS) to allow, upon request, the incidental, but not intentional, taking of small numbers of marine mammals by United States citizens who engage in a specified activity (other than commercial fishing) within a specified geographical region, if certain findings are made and regulations are issued. Under the MMPA, the term “take” means to harass, hunt, capture, or kill or to attempt to harass, hunt, capture, or kill any marine mammal.

Authorization for incidental taking, in the form of annual LOAs, may be granted by NMFS for periods up to five years if NMFS finds, after notice and opportunity for public comment, that the taking will have a negligible impact on the species or stock(s) of marine mammals, and will not have an

unmitigable adverse impact on the availability of the species or stock(s) for subsistence uses (where relevant). In addition, NMFS must prescribe regulations that include permissible methods of taking and other means of effecting the least practicable adverse impact on the species and its habitat (*i.e.*, mitigation), and on the availability of the species for subsistence uses, paying particular attention to rookeries, mating rounds, and areas of similar significance. The regulations also must include requirements pertaining to the monitoring and reporting of such taking.

Regulations governing the taking of marine mammals incidental to EROS were published on June 19, 2008 (73 FR 34875), and remain in effect through July 19, 2013. For detailed information on this action, please refer to that **Federal Register** notice. The species that applicants may take in small numbers during EROS activities are bottlenose dolphins (*Tursiops truncatus*), Atlantic spotted dolphins (*Stenella frontalis*), pantropical spotted dolphins (*Stenella attenuata*), Clymene dolphins (*Stenella clymene*), striped dolphins (*Stenella coeruleoalba*), spinner dolphins (*Stenella longirostris*), rough-toothed dolphins (*Steno bredanensis*), Risso’s dolphins (*Grampus griseus*), melon-headed whales (*Peponocephala electra*), short-finned pilot whales (*Globicephala macrorhynchus*), and sperm whales (*Physeter macrocephalus*). NMFS received requests for LOAs from El Paso Exploration & Production Company, L.P. (El Paso) and EOG Resources, Inc. (EOG Resources) for activities covered by EROS regulations.

Reporting

NMFS regulations require timely receipt of reports for activities conducted under the previously issued LOA and a determination that the required mitigation, monitoring and reporting were undertaken. NMFS Galveston Laboratory’s Platform Removal Observer Program (PROP) has provided reports for El Paso and EOG Resources removal of offshore structures in 2010. NMFS PROP observers reported the following during El Paso and EOG Resources’ EROS operations in 2010 to 2011:

Company	Structure	Dates	Marine mammal sightings (individuals)	Biological impacts observed to marine mammals
El Paso	Ship Shoal Area, Block 278, Platform A.	August 14 to 23, 2010	None	None.
El Paso	West Cameron Area, Block 150, Platform F.	August 20 to 21, 2010	Bottlenose Dolphins (12) ..	None.

Company	Structure	Dates	Marine mammal sightings (individuals)	Biological impacts observed to marine mammals
El Paso	South Timbalier Area, Block 212, Platform C.	August 23 to 26, 2010	None	None.
EOG Resources	Viosca Knoll Area, Block 31, Platform A.	September 9 to 12, 18, 20 to 22, 2010.	None	None.
EOG Resources	Viosca Knoll Area, Block 74, Platform 2.	September 1 to 4, 2010	None	None.
EOG Resources	Viosca Knoll Area, Block 124, Platform A.	September 5 to 8, 2010	None	None.

Pursuant to these regulations, NMFS has issued an LOA to El Paso and EOG Resources. Issuance of the LOAs is based on a finding made in the preamble to the final rule that the total taking by these activities (with monitoring, mitigation, and reporting measures) will result in no more than a negligible impact on the affected species or stock(s) of marine mammals and will not have an unmitigable adverse impact on subsistence uses. NMFS will review reports to ensure that the applicants are in compliance with meeting the requirements contained in the implementing regulations and LOA, including monitoring, mitigation, and reporting requirements.

Dated: June 3, 2011.

Helen M. Golde,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XA476

Pacific 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 Pacific Fishery Management Council's (Pacific Council) Tule Chinook Workgroup (TCW) will hold a meeting to review work products and develop an abundance-based harvest management approach for Columbia River natural tule Chinook. This meeting of the TCW is open to the public.

DATES: The meeting will be held Thursday, July 14, 2011, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Pacific Fishery Management

Council, 7700 NE. Ambassador Place, Suite 101, Portland, OR 97220-1384; telephone: (503) 820-2280.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Chuck Tracy, Salmon Management Staff Officer, Pacific Fishery Management Council; telephone: (503) 820-2280.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This meeting of the TCW will involve review of initial work products and refining future work plans. Eventually, TCW work products will be reviewed by the Pacific Council, and if approved, would be submitted to NMFS for possible consideration in the next Lower Columbia River tule biological opinion for ocean salmon seasons in 2012 and beyond, and distributed to State and Federal recovery planning processes. In the event that a usable approach emerges from this process, the Pacific Council may consider a fishery management plan (FMP) amendment process beginning after November 2011 to adopt the approach as a formal conservation objective in the Salmon FMP.

Although non-emergency issues not contained in the meeting agenda may come before the TCW for discussion, those issues may not be the subject of formal action during this meeting. 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 Fishery Conservation and Management Act, provided the public has been notified of the intent to take final action to address the emergency.

Special Accommodations

The meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Mr. Kris Kleinschmidt at (503) 820-2280 at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

Dated: June 6, 2011.

Tracey L. Thompson,

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

[FR Doc. 2011-14240 Filed 6-8-11; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XA255

Takes of Marine Mammals Incidental to Specified Activities; Marine Geophysical Survey in the Central Gulf of Alaska, June 2011

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

ACTION: Notice; issuance of an incidental take authorization (ITA).

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) regulation, notification is hereby given that NMFS has issued an Incidental Harassment Authorization (IHA) to the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) to take marine mammals, by Level B harassment, incidental to conducting a marine geophysical survey in the central Gulf of Alaska (GOA), June 2011.

DATES: Effective June 5 through July 25, 2011.

ADDRESSES: A copy of the IHA and application are available by writing to P. Michael Payne, Chief, Permits, Conservation and Education Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910 or by telephoning the contacts listed here.

A copy of the application containing a list of the references used in this document may be obtained by writing to the above address, telephoning the contact listed here (see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**) or visiting the Internet at: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/permits/incidental.htm#applications>. The following associated documents are also available at the same Internet address: Environmental Assessment (EA), prepared by USGS. The NMFS Biological Opinion will be available online at: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/consultation/opinions.htm>. Documents