

Disclosure

We will disclose the calculations performed for these amended final results to parties to this segment of the proceeding within five days of the date of the publication of these amended final results, pursuant to 19 CFR 351.224(b).

Assessment Rate

Pursuant to section 751(a)(2)(C) of the Act and 19 CFR 351.212(b)(1), Commerce has determined, and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) shall assess, antidumping duties on all appropriate entries of subject merchandise in accordance with these amended final results of the administrative review.

In accordance with 19 CFR 351.212(b)(1), we calculated importer-specific *ad valorem* antidumping duty assessment rates based on the ratio of the total amount of dumping calculated for the examined sales for each importer to the total entered value of the sales for each importer. Where an importer-specific antidumping duty assessment rate is zero or *de minimis* within the meaning of 19 CFR 351.106(c)(1), Commerce will instruct CBP to liquidate the appropriate entries without regard to antidumping duties.

Commerce's "automatic assessment" will apply to entries of subject merchandise during the period of review produced by Ratnamani for which the reviewed company did not know that the merchandise it sold to the intermediary (*e.g.*, a reseller, trading company, or exporter) was destined for the United States. In such instances, we will instruct CBP to liquidate unreviewed entries at the all-others rate if there is no rate for the intermediate company(ies) involved in the transaction.

For the companies which were not selected for individual examination, we will instruct CBP to assess antidumping duties at an *ad valorem* assessment rate equal to the weighted-average dumping margin determined in these amended final results.

The amended final results of this review shall be the basis for the assessment of antidumping duties on entries of merchandise covered by the amended final results of this review and for future deposits of estimated duties, where applicable.⁹

Commerce intends to issue assessment instructions to CBP no earlier than 35 days after the date of publication of the amended final results of this review in the **Federal Register**.

If a timely summons is filed at the U.S. Court of International Trade, the assessment instructions will direct CBP not to liquidate relevant entries until the time for parties to file a request for a statutory injunction has expired (*i.e.*, within 90 days of publication).

Cash Deposit Requirements

The following cash deposit requirements will be effective retroactively for all shipments of subject merchandise that entered, or were withdrawn from warehouse, for consumption on or after June 9, 2023, the date of publication of the *Final Results* of this administrative review, as provided for by section 751(a)(2)(C) of the Act: (1) the cash deposit rate for the companies listed above will be equal to the weighted-average dumping margin established in these amended final results of review; (2) for producers or exporters not covered in this review but covered in a prior segment of the proceeding, the cash deposit rate will continue to be the company-specific rate published for the most recently completed segment of this proceeding; (3) if the exporter is not a firm covered in this review or another completed segment of this proceeding, but the producer is, then the cash deposit rate will be the rate established for the most recently completed segment of this proceeding for the producer of the merchandise; and (4) if neither the exporter nor the producer is a firm covered in this or any previously completed segment of this proceeding, then the cash deposit rate will be the all-others rate of 8.35 percent established in the less-than-fair-value investigation.¹⁰

These cash deposit requirements, when imposed, shall remain in effect until further notice.

Notification to Importers

This notice also serves as a final reminder to importers of their responsibility under 19 CFR 351.402(f) to file a certificate regarding the reimbursement of antidumping and/or countervailing duties prior to liquidation of the relevant entries during the period of review. Failure to comply with this requirement could result in Commerce's presumption that reimbursement of antidumping and/or countervailing duties occurred and the subsequent assessment of double antidumping duties, and/or an increase in the amount of antidumping duties by the amount of the countervailing duties.

¹⁰ See *Welded Stainless Pressure Pipe from India: Antidumping Duty and Countervailing Duty Orders*, 81 FR 81062 (November 17, 2016).

Administrative Protective Order

This notice also serves as a reminder to parties subject to administrative protective orders (APO) of their responsibility concerning the return or destruction of proprietary information disclosed under APO in accordance with 19 CFR 351.305(a)(3), which continues to govern business proprietary information in this segment of the proceeding. Timely written notification of the return or destruction of APO materials, or conversion to judicial protective order, is hereby requested. Failure to comply with the regulations and the terms of an APO is a sanctionable violation.

Notification to Interested Parties

We are issuing and publishing this notice in accordance with sections 751(h) and 777(i)(1) of the Act, and 19 CFR 351.224(e).

Dated: July 21, 2023.

Lisa W. Wang,

Assistant Secretary for Enforcement and Compliance.

Appendix

List of Companies Not Selected for Individual Examination

1. Apex Tubes Private Ltd.
2. Apurvi Industries
3. Arihant Tubes
4. Divine Tubes Pvt. Ltd.
5. Heavy Metal & Tubes
6. J.S.S. Steelitalia Ltd.
7. Linkwell Seamless Tubes Private Limited
8. Maxim Tubes Company Pvt. Ltd.
9. MBM Tubes Pvt. Ltd.
10. Mukat Tanks & Vessel Ltd.
11. Neotiss Ltd.
12. Prakash Steelage Ltd.
13. Quality Stainless Pvt. Ltd.
14. Raajratna Metal Industries Ltd.
15. Ratnadeep Metal & Tubes Ltd.
16. Remi Edelstahl Tubulars
17. Shubhlaxmi Metals & Tubes Private Limited
18. SLS Tubes Pvt. Ltd.
19. Steamline Industries Ltd.

[FR Doc. 2023–15950 Filed 7–26–23; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648–XD156]

Taking and Importing Marine Mammals; Taking Marine Mammals Incidental to Geophysical Surveys Related to Oil and Gas Activities in the Gulf of Mexico

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and

⁹ See section 751(a)(2)(C) of the Act.

Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice; issuance of letter of authorization.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA), as amended, its implementing regulations, and NMFS' MMPA Regulations for Taking Marine Mammals Incidental to Geophysical Surveys Related to Oil and Gas Activities in the Gulf of Mexico, notification is hereby given that a Letter of Authorization (LOA) has been issued to Shell Offshore Inc. (Shell) for the take of marine mammals incidental to geophysical survey activity in the Gulf of Mexico.

DATES: The LOA is effective from July 21, 2023 through April 30, 2024.

ADDRESSES: The LOA, LOA request, and supporting documentation are available online at: www.fisheries.noaa.gov/action/incidental-take-authorization-oil-and-gas-industry-geophysical-survey-activity-gulf-mexico. In case of problems accessing these documents, please call the contact listed below (see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jenna Harlacher, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, (301) 427-8401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Sections 101(a)(5)(A) and (D) of the MMPA (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*) direct the Secretary of Commerce 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, a notice of a proposed authorization is provided to the public for review.

An authorization for incidental takings shall be granted if NMFS finds that the taking will have a negligible impact on the species or stock(s), will not have an unmitigable adverse impact on the availability of the species or stock(s) for subsistence uses (where relevant), and if the permissible methods of taking and requirements pertaining to the mitigation, monitoring and reporting of such takings are set forth. NMFS has defined "negligible impact" in 50 CFR 216.103 as an impact resulting from the specified activity that cannot be reasonably expected to, and is not reasonably likely to, adversely affect the species or stock through effects on annual rates of recruitment or survival.

Except with respect to certain activities not pertinent here, the MMPA defines "harassment" as: any act of pursuit, torment, or annoyance which (i) has the potential to injure a marine mammal or marine mammal stock in the wild (Level A harassment); or (ii) has the potential to disturb a marine mammal or marine mammal stock in the wild by causing disruption of behavioral patterns, including, but not limited to, migration, breathing, nursing, breeding, feeding, or sheltering (Level B harassment).

On January 19, 2021, we issued a final rule with regulations to govern the unintentional taking of marine mammals incidental to geophysical survey activities conducted by oil and gas industry operators, and those persons authorized to conduct activities on their behalf (collectively "industry operators"), in Federal waters of the U.S. Gulf of Mexico (GOM) over the course of 5 years (86 FR 5322; January 19, 2021). The rule was based on our findings that the total taking from the specified activities over the 5-year period will have a negligible impact on the affected species or stock(s) of marine mammals and will not have an unmitigable adverse impact on the availability of those species or stocks for subsistence uses. The rule became effective on April 19, 2021.

Our regulations at 50 CFR 217.180 *et seq.* allow for the issuance of LOAs to industry operators for the incidental take of marine mammals during geophysical survey activities and prescribe the permissible methods of taking and other means of effecting the least practicable adverse impact on marine mammal species or stocks and their habitat (often referred to as mitigation), as well as requirements pertaining to the monitoring and reporting of such taking. Under 50 CFR 217.186(e), issuance of an LOA shall be based on a determination that the level of taking will be consistent with the findings made for the total taking allowable under these regulations and a determination that the amount of take authorized under the LOA is of no more than small numbers.

Summary of Request and Analysis

Shell plans to conduct a 3D ocean bottom node (OBN) survey over approximately 185 lease blocks in the Mississippi Canyon and Atwater Valley Protraction Areas, with approximate water depths ranging from 1,100 to 1,500 meters (m). See Section F of the LOA application for a map of the area.

Shell anticipates using two source vessels, with one towing dual conventional airgun array sources

consisting of 32 elements, with a total volume of 5,110 cubic inches (in³). The second source vessel is expected to tow the low-frequency tuned pulse source (TPS). This source was not included in the acoustic exposure modeling developed in support of the rule. However, the TPS source was previously described and evaluated in the notice of issuance of a previous LOA to Shell (86 FR 37309, 37310; July 15, 2021; see also 87 FR 55790, 55791 (September 12, 2022 (notice of issuance of LOA to Shell)). For additional detail regarding sources, see Section C of the LOA application. Based on this information we have determined there will be no effects of a magnitude or intensity different from those evaluated in support of the rule. NMFS therefore expects that use of modeling results supporting the final rule relating to use of the 72 element, 8,000 in 3 airgun array are expected to be significantly conservative as a proxy for use in evaluating potential impacts of use of the low-frequency source. The conventional airgun arrays will be used for the majority of the survey and will fire in a flip-flop pattern on a 50 x 50 m shot grid. The low-frequency source will be used to acquire velocity data on a 50 x 200 m shot grid. A separation distance of at least 2,500 m will be maintained between each vessel.

Consistent with the preamble to the final rule, the survey effort proposed by Shell in its LOA request was used to develop LOA-specific take estimates based on the acoustic exposure modeling results described in the preamble (86 FR 5398, January 19, 2021). In order to generate the appropriate take numbers for authorization, the following information was considered: (1) survey type; (2) location (by modeling zone;¹) (3) number of days; and (4) season.² The acoustic exposure modeling performed in support of the rule provides 24-hour exposure estimates for each species, specific to each modeled survey type in each zone and season.

No 3D OBN surveys were included in the modeled survey types, and use of existing proxies (*i.e.*, 2D, 3D NAZ, 3D WAZ, Coil) is generally conservative for use in evaluation of 3D OBN survey effort, largely due to the greater area covered by the modeled proxies. Summary descriptions of these modeled survey geometries are available in the preamble to the proposed rule (83 FR

¹ For purposes of acoustic exposure modeling, the GOM was divided into seven zones. Zone 1 is not included in the geographic scope of the rule.

² For purposes of acoustic exposure modeling, seasons include winter (December–March) and summer (April–November).

29212, 29220; June 22, 2018). Coil was selected as the best available proxy survey type in this case because the spatial coverage of the planned survey is most similar to the coil survey pattern. The planned 3D OBN survey will involve two source vessels sailing along survey lines up to 56 kilometers (km) in length. The coil survey pattern was assumed to cover approximately 144 kilometers squared (km²) per day (compared with approximately 795 km², 199 km², and 845 km² per day for the 2D, 3D NAZ, and 3D WAZ survey patterns, respectively). Among the different parameters of the modeled survey patterns (e.g., area covered, line spacing, number of sources, shot interval, total simulated pulses), NMFS considers area covered per day to be most influential on daily modeled exposures exceeding Level B harassment criteria. Although Shell is not proposing to perform a survey using the coil geometry, its planned 3D OBN survey is expected to cover an average area of 55 km² per day, meaning that the coil proxy is most representative of the effort planned by Shell in terms of predicted Level B harassment exposures.

All available acoustic exposure modeling results assume use of a 72-element, 8,000 in³ array. Thus, take numbers authorized through the LOA are considered conservative due to differences in the sound sources planned for use (32 element, 5,100 in³ airgun array and low-frequency sources), as compared to the source modeled for the rule.

The survey will take place over approximately 80 days, including 58 days of sound source operation, all within Zone 5. Although Shell's application states that all survey days would occur in the "Winter" season, NMFS assumes that the seasonal distribution of survey days is not known in advance. Therefore, the take estimates for each species are based on the season that produces the greater value.

For some species, take estimates based solely on the modeling yielded results that are not realistically likely to occur when considered in light of other relevant information available during the rulemaking process regarding marine mammal occurrence in the GOM. The approach used in the acoustic exposure modeling, in which seven modeling zones were defined over the U.S. GOM, necessarily averages fine-scale information about marine mammal distribution over the large area of each modeling zone. Thus, although the modeling conducted for the rule is a natural starting point for estimating

take, the rule acknowledged that other information could be considered (see, e.g., 86 FR 5442, January 19, 2021), discussing the need to provide flexibility and make efficient use of previous public and agency review of other information and identifying that additional public review is not necessary unless the model or inputs used differ substantively from those that were previously reviewed by NMFS and the public. For this survey, NMFS has other relevant information reviewed during the rulemaking that indicates use of the acoustic exposure modeling to generate a take estimate for certain marine mammal species produces results inconsistent with what is known regarding their occurrence in the GOM. Accordingly, we have adjusted the calculated take estimates for those species as described below.

NMFS' final rule described a "core habitat area" for Rice's whales (formerly known as GOM Bryde's whales)³ located in the northeastern GOM in waters between 100–400 m depth along the continental shelf break (Rosel *et al.*, 2016). However, whaling records suggest that Rice's whales historically had a broader distribution within similar habitat parameters throughout the GOM (Reeves *et al.*, 2011; Rosel and Wilcox, 2014). In addition, habitat-based density modeling identified similar habitat (i.e., approximately 100–400 m water depths along the continental shelf break) as being potential Rice's whale habitat (Roberts *et al.*, 2016), although the core habitat area contained approximately 92 percent of the predicted abundance of Rice's whales. See discussion provided at, e.g., 83 FR 29228, 83 FR 29280 (June 22, 2018); 86 FR 5418 (January 19, 2021).

Although Rice's whales may occur outside of the core habitat area, we expect that any such occurrence would be limited to the narrow band of suitable habitat described above (i.e., 100–400 m) and that, based on the few available records, these occurrences would be rare. Shell's planned activities will occur in water depths of approximately 1,100–1,500 m in the central GOM. Thus, NMFS does not expect there to be the reasonable potential for take of Rice's whale in association with this survey and, accordingly, does not authorize take of Rice's whale through this LOA.

Killer whales are the most rarely encountered species in the GOM,

typically in deep waters of the central GOM (Roberts *et al.*, 2015; Maze-Foley and Mullin, 2006). The approach used in the acoustic exposure modeling, in which seven modeling zones were defined over the U.S. GOM, necessarily averages fine-scale information about marine mammal distribution over the large area of each modeling zone. NMFS has determined that the approach results in unrealistic projections regarding the likelihood of encountering killer whales.

As discussed in the final rule, the density models produced by Roberts *et al.* (2016) provide the best available scientific information regarding predicted density patterns of cetaceans in the U.S. GOM. The predictions represent the output of models derived from multi-year observations and associated environmental parameters that incorporate corrections for detection bias. However, in the case of killer whales, the model is informed by few data, as indicated by the coefficient of variation associated with the abundance predicted by the model (0.41, the second-highest of any GOM species model; Roberts *et al.*, 2016). The model's authors noted the expected non-uniform distribution of this rarely-encountered species (as discussed above) and expressed that, due to the limited data available to inform the model, it "should be viewed cautiously" (Roberts *et al.*, 2015).

NOAA surveys in the GOM from 1992–2009 reported only 16 sightings of killer whales, with an additional three encounters during more recent survey effort from 2017–18 (Waring *et al.*, 2013; www.boem.gov/gommapps). Two other species were also observed on fewer than 20 occasions during the 1992–2009 NOAA surveys (Fraser's dolphin and false killer whale⁴). However, observational data collected by PSOs on industry geophysical survey vessels from 2002–2015 distinguish the killer whale in terms of rarity. During this period, killer whales were encountered on only 10 occasions, whereas the next most rarely encountered species (Fraser's dolphin) was recorded on 69 occasions (Barkaszi and Kelly, 2019). The false killer whale and pygmy killer whale were the next most rarely encountered species, with 110 records each. The killer whale was the species with the lowest detection frequency during each period over which PSO data were synthesized (2002–2008 and 2009–2015). This information qualitatively informed our rulemaking process, as

³ The final rule refers to the GOM Bryde's whale (*Balaenoptera edeni*). These whales were subsequently described as a new species, Rice's whale (*Balaenoptera ricei*) (Rosel *et al.*, 2021).

⁴ However, note that these species have been observed over a greater range of water depths in the GOM than have killer whales.

discussed at 86 FR 5334 (January 19, 2021), and similarly informs our analysis here.

The rarity of encounters during seismic surveys is not likely to be the product of high bias on the probability of detection. Unlike certain cryptic species with high detection bias, such as *Kogia* spp. or beaked whales, or deep-diving species with high availability bias, such as beaked whales or sperm whales, killer whales are typically available for detection when present and are easily observed. Roberts *et al.* (2015) stated that availability is not a major factor affecting detectability of killer whales from shipboard surveys, as they are not a particularly long-diving species. Baird *et al.* (2005) reported that mean dive durations for 41 fish-eating killer whales for dives greater than or equal to 1 minute in duration was 2.3–2.4 minutes, and Hooker *et al.* (2012) reported that killer whales spent 78 percent of their time at depths between 0–10 m. Similarly, Kvadsheim *et al.* (2012) reported data from a study of four killer whales, noting that the whales performed 20 times as many dives 1–30 m in depth than to deeper waters, with an average depth during those most common dives of approximately 3 m.

In summary, killer whales are the most rarely encountered species in the GOM and typically occur only in particularly deep water. This survey would take place in deep waters that would overlap with depths in which killer whales typically occur. While this information is reflected through the density model informing the acoustic exposure modeling results, there is relatively high uncertainty associated with the model for this species, and the acoustic exposure modeling applies mean distribution data over areas where the species is in fact less likely to occur. NMFS’ determination in reflection of the data discussed above, which

informed the final rule, is that use of the generic acoustic exposure modeling results for killer whales will generally result in estimated take numbers that are inconsistent with the assumptions made in the rule regarding expected killer whale take (86 FR 5403; January 19, 2021).

In past authorizations, NMFS has often addressed situations involving the low likelihood of encountering a rare species, such as killer whales in the GOM, through authorization of take of a single group of average size (*i.e.*, representing a single potential encounter). See 83 FR 63268; December 7, 2018. See also 86 FR 29090; May 28, 2021 and 85 FR 55645; September 9, 2020. For the reasons expressed above, NMFS determined that a single encounter of killer whales is more likely than the model-generated estimates and has authorized take associated with a single group encounter (*i.e.*, up to 7 animals).

Based on the results of our analysis, NMFS has determined that the level of taking expected for this survey and authorized through the LOA is consistent with the findings made for the total taking allowable under the regulations. See Table 1 in this notice and Table 9 of the rule (86 FR 5322; January 19, 2021).

Small Numbers Determination

Under the GOM rule, NMFS may not authorize incidental take of marine mammals in an LOA if it will exceed “small numbers.” In short, when an acceptable estimate of the individual marine mammals taken is available, if the estimated number of individual animals taken is up to, but not greater than, one-third of the best available abundance estimate, NMFS will determine that the numbers of marine mammals taken of a species or stock are small. For more information please see NMFS’ discussion of the MMPA’s small

numbers requirement provided in the final rule (86 FR 5438; January 19, 2021).

The take numbers for authorization are determined as described above in the Summary of Request and Analysis section. Subsequently, the total incidents of harassment for each species are multiplied by scalar ratios to produce a derived product that better reflects the number of individuals likely to be taken within a survey (as compared to the total number of instances of take), accounting for the likelihood that some individual marine mammals may be taken on more than one day (see 86 FR 5404; January 19, 2021). The output of this scaling, where appropriate, is incorporated into adjusted total take estimates that are the basis for NMFS’ small numbers determinations, as depicted in Table 1.

This product is used by NMFS in making the necessary small numbers determinations through comparison with the best available abundance estimates (see discussion at 86 FR 5391; January 19, 2021). For this comparison, NMFS’ approach is to use the maximum theoretical population, determined through review of current stock assessment reports (SAR; www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/marine-mammal-protection/marine-mammal-stock-assessments) and model-predicted abundance information (<https://seamap.env.duke.edu/models/Duke/GOM/>). For the latter, for taxa where a density surface model could be produced, we use the maximum mean seasonal (*i.e.*, 3-month) abundance prediction for purposes of comparison as a precautionary smoothing of month-to-month fluctuations and in consideration of a corresponding lack of data in the literature regarding seasonal distribution of marine mammals in the GOM. Information supporting the small numbers determinations is provided in Table 1.

TABLE 1—TAKE ANALYSIS

Species	Authorized take	Scaled take ¹	Abundance ²	Percent abundance
Rice’s whale	0	n/a	51	0
Sperm whale	1,526	645	2,207	29.2
<i>Kogia</i> spp	3,577	206	4,373	4.7
Beaked whales	6,733	680	3,768	18.0
Rough-toothed dolphin	1,158	332	4,853	6.8
Bottlenose dolphin	5,486	1,574	176,108	0.9
Clymene dolphin	3,258	935	11,895	7.9
Atlantic spotted dolphin	2,191	629	74,785	0.8
Pantropical spotted dolphin	14,784	4,243	102,361	4.1
Spinner dolphin	3,961	1,137	25,114	4.5
Striped dolphin	1,272	365	5,229	7.0
Fraser’s dolphin	366	105	1,665	6.3
Risso’s dolphin	957	282	3,764	7.5
Melon-headed whale	2,140	631	7,003	9.0

TABLE 1—TAKE ANALYSIS—Continued

Species	Authorized take	Scaled take ¹	Abundance ²	Percent abundance
Pygmy killer whale	504	149	2,126	7.0
False killer whale	801	236	3,204	7.4
Killer whale	7	n/a	267	2.6
Short-finned pilot whale	619	183	1,981	9.2

¹ Scalar ratios were applied to “Authorized Take” values as described at 86 FR 5322, 5404 (January 19, 2021) to derive scaled take numbers shown here.

² Best abundance estimate. For most taxa, the best abundance estimate for purposes of comparison with take estimates is considered here to be the model-predicted abundance (Roberts *et al.*, 2016). For those taxa where a density surface model predicting abundance by month was produced, the maximum mean seasonal abundance was used. For those taxa where abundance is not predicted by month, only mean annual abundance is available. For Rice’s whale and killer whale, the larger estimated SAR abundance estimate is used.

³ Includes 31 takes by Level A harassment and 546 takes by Level B harassment. Scalar ratio is applied to takes by Level B harassment only; small numbers determination made on basis of scaled Level B harassment take plus authorized Level A harassment take.

Based on the analysis contained herein of Shell’s proposed survey activity described in its LOA application and the anticipated take of marine mammals, NMFS finds that small numbers of marine mammals will be taken relative to the affected species or stock sizes (*i.e.*, less than one-third of the best available abundance estimate) and therefore the taking is of no more than small numbers.

Authorization

NMFS has determined that the level of taking for this LOA request is consistent with the findings made for the total taking allowable under the incidental take regulations and that the amount of take authorized under the LOA is of no more than small numbers. Accordingly, we have issued an LOA to Shell authorizing the take of marine mammals incidental to its geophysical survey activity, as described above.

Dated: July 21, 2023.

Angela Somma,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Department of the Army, Corps of Engineers

Notice of Intent To Prepare an Integrated Feasibility Report and Environmental Impact Statement for the San Francisco Waterfront Coastal Flood Study, San Francisco County, California

AGENCY: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Department of the Army, DoD.

ACTION: Notice of Intent to prepare a Draft Integrated Feasibility Report and Environmental Impact Statement for the San Francisco Waterfront Coastal Flood

Study, San Francisco County, California.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as implemented by the Council on Environmental Quality regulations, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Tulsa District, announces its intent to prepare a Draft Integrated Feasibility Report and Environmental Impact Statement (IFR–EIS) for the San Francisco Waterfront Coastal Flood Study. The study will investigate the feasibility of managing tidal and fluvial flooding and sea level rise along 7.5 miles of the San Francisco Waterfront, from Aquatic Park to Herons Head Park, in the City of San Francisco, San Francisco County, California. This notice announces USACE’s intent to determine the scope of the issues to be addressed and identify the significant issues related to a proposed action.

DATES: Written comments should be submitted by August 28, 2023.

ADDRESSES: Written comments related to the development of the Draft IFR–EIS may be submitted by any of the following methods:

- Email: SFWFRS@usace.army.mil.
- Mail: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Tulsa District, ATTN: RPEC–SFWS, 2488 E 81st Street, Tulsa, OK 74137.
- For more information visit the project website at: <https://sfport.com/wrp/usace>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Questions or comments regarding the proposed Draft IFR–EIS may be directed to Ms. Melinda Fisher at 918–669–7423 or by email at SFWFRS@usace.army.mil.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

1. *Authority.* The San Francisco Waterfront Coastal Flood Study (the Study) was originally authorized under section 110 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1950, Public Law (Pub. L.) 515, 64 stat. 163. The project was subsequently authorized under Section 142 of the Water Resources

Development Act (WRDA) of 1976, Pub. L. 94–587, 90 stat. 2917, 2930, as amended by Section 705 of WRDA of 1986, Pub. L. 99–662, 100 stat. 4082, 4158 and section 203 of WRDA 2020.

2. *Background.* The USACE and the Port of San Francisco (Port) have partnered to study flood risk along 7.5 miles of San Francisco’s bayside shoreline including areas between Aquatic Park and Heron’s Head Park. The Study is one of several coordinated waterfront resiliency efforts being undertaken by the Port in partnership with other federal, state, and local agencies to plan and reduce the risk of anticipated seismic activity, flooding, coastal storm damages, and sea level rise along the waterfront.

The Study began in 2018 under the USACE San Francisco District, South Pacific Division and was transferred to the Tulsa District out of the Southwestern Division in 2021. The Study follows the USACE Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Risk Informed, and Timely (SMART) planning process which targets a feasibility study to be completed within three years, but due to several complexities, including consideration of seismic conditions and the diversity of the geographic regions and stakeholders, the Study has been approved to complete the process in seven years.

3. *Purpose and Need.* The purpose of the Study is to investigate the feasibility of managing tidal and fluvial flooding and sea level rise along 7.5 miles of the San Francisco Bay shoreline. The project area is at risk of flooding from bay water during coastal storms, extreme tides, and future sea level rise. Flooding along the waterfront could cause extensive damage to public infrastructure and private property, loss of life and deterioration of public health and safety, degradation of the natural environment, and adverse changes to the social and economic character of the waterfront community. The risk is