

issuance of the authorization is not likely to adversely affect any listed marine mammal species.

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 evaluate our proposed action (*i.e.*, the issuance of an IHA) and alternatives 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 NAO 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 precludes this categorical exclusion. Accordingly, NMFS has determined that the issuance of this IHA qualifies to be categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

Authorization

NMFS has issued an IHA to Transco for the potential harassment of small numbers of 11 marine mammal species incidental to the LNYBL Maintenance project in Sandy Hook Channel, NJ, that includes the previously explained mitigation, monitoring and reporting requirements.

Dated: March 14, 2024.

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–XD819]

Marine Mammals; File No. 27342

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

ACTION: Notice; receipt of application.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that Heidi Pearson, Ph.D., University of Alaska Southeast, 11066 Auke Lake Way, Juneau, AK 99801, has applied in due form for a permit to conduct research on marine mammals.

DATES: Written comments must be received on or before April 22, 2024.

ADDRESSES: The application and related documents are available for review by selecting “Records Open for Public Comment” from the “Features” box on the Applications and Permits for Protected Species home page, <https://apps.nmfs.noaa.gov>, and then selecting File No. 27342 from the list of available applications. These documents are also available upon written request via email to NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov.

Written comments on this application should be submitted via email to NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov. Please include File No. 27342 in the subject line of the email comment.

Those individuals requesting a public hearing should submit a written request via email to NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov. The request should set forth the specific reasons why a hearing on this application would be appropriate.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Shasta McClenahan, Ph.D., or Courtney Smith, Ph.D., (301) 427–8401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The subject permit 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 part 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 222–226).

The applicant requests a 5-year research permit to study marine mammal behavior, ecology, health, and movement patterns. Up to 11 species of marine mammals may be harassed including the following ESA-listed species: fin (*Balaenoptera physalus*), gray (*Eschrichtius robustus*; Western North Pacific distinct population segment [DPS]), humpback (*Megaptera novaeangliae*; Mexico DPS), and sperm (*Physeter macrocephalus*) whales, and Steller sea lions (*Eumetopias jubatus*, Western DPS). Research may occur year-round in waters off Southeast Alaska. Research may be conducted from a vessel or unmanned aircraft system for counts, photography and video recording (above and underwater), photogrammetry, passive acoustics, tracking, suction-cup tagging, and biological sampling (skin and blubber biopsy, skin swabs, sloughed skin, exhaled air, feces, and eDNA). See the application for complete numbers of animals requested by species, age-class, and procedure.

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

Dated: March 18, 2024.

Julia M. Harrison,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Office of the Secretary

Department of Defense Military Family Readiness Council; Notice of Federal Advisory Committee Meeting

AGENCY: Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD(P&R)), Department of Defense (DoD).

ACTION: Notice of Federal Advisory Committee meeting.

SUMMARY: The DoD is publishing this notice to announce the following Federal Advisory Committee meeting of the DoD Military Family Readiness Council (MFRC) will take place.

DATES: Open to the public, Wednesday, March 27, 2024, from 1 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held by videoconference. Participant access information will be provided after registering. (Pre-meeting registration is required. See guidance in

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION, “Meeting Accessibility”).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Vesen L. Thompson, (703) 571–2360 (voice), OSD Pentagon OUSD P&R Mailbox Family Readiness Council, osd.pentagon.ousd-p-r.mbx.family-readiness-council@mail.mil (Email). Mailing address: Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Military Community & Family Policy), 1500 Defense Pentagon, Washington DC 20301–1500, Room 5A726. Website: <http://www.militaryonesource.mil/those-who-support-mfrc>.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This meeting is being held under the provisions of chapter 10 of title 5, United States Code (U.S.C) (commonly known as the “Federal Advisory Committee Act” or “FACA”), title 5,