

Protected Species (APPS) home page, <https://apps.nmfs.noaa.gov>, and then selecting File No. 20443 from the list of available applications.

These documents are also available upon written request or by appointment in the Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 13705, Silver Spring, MD 20910; phone (301) 427-8401; fax (301) 713-0376.

Written comments on this application should be submitted to the Chief, Permits and Conservation Division, at the address listed above. Comments may also be submitted by facsimile to (301) 713-0376, or by email to NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov. Please include the File No. in the subject line of the email comment.

Those individuals requesting a public hearing should submit a written request to the Chief, Permits and Conservation Division at the address listed above. The request should set forth the specific reasons why a hearing on this application would be appropriate.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Rosa González or Sara Young, (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 applicant requests a five-year permit to study harbor seals (*Phoca vitulina*) throughout their range in Alaska, including Southeast Alaska, Gulf of Alaska and Bering Sea. The overall objective of the research is to provide a greater understanding of the proximate and ultimate factors that regulate their abundance, which is required to develop effective management and conservation strategies. Research activities include aerial, vessel and ground surveys, radio tracking, photo-identification, photograph/video, behavioral observations and monitoring, and capture of up to 350 animals by entanglement in a net in the water or by hoop net or dip net on land. Captured animals may be chemical restraint; physical restraint by hand, net, cage or stretcher. Researchers may collect biological samples (e.g., scat, blood, milk from lactating females, blubber, muscle, skin, hair, mucus membrane swabs, stomach content subsample, tooth and vibrissae); standard morphometrics and weight; measurements of blubber via ultrasound; and inject PIT tags and

attach flipper tags. A subset of the captured animals may also be outfitted with external transmitters and data-loggers. The applicant also requests export (worldwide) and import of samples for analysis, incidental disturbance and unintentional mortality of harbor seals and porpoises (*Phocoena phocoena*), and intentional mortality (euthanasia) of harbor seals.

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: November 15, 2016.

Julia Harrison,

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

[FR Doc. 2016-27861 Filed 11-18-16; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XE204

Endangered Species; File No. 19621

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

ACTION: Notice; receipt of application for a permit modification.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that Michael Arendt, South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, Marine Resources Division, 217 Fort Johnson Road, Charleston, SC 29412, has requested a modification to scientific research Permit No. 19621.

DATES: Written, telefaxed, or email comments must be received on or before December 21, 2016.

ADDRESSES: The modification request 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 (APPS) home page, <https://apps.nmfs.noaa.gov>, and then selecting File No. 19621 from the list of available applications. These documents are also available upon written request

or by appointment in the Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 13705, Silver Spring, MD 20910; phone (301) 427-8401; fax (301) 713-0376.

Written comments on this application should be submitted to the Chief, Permits and Conservation Division, at the address listed above. Comments may also be submitted by facsimile to (301) 713-0376, or by email to NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov. Please include the File No. in the subject line of the email comment.

Those individuals requesting a public hearing should submit a written request to the Chief, Permits and Conservation Division at the address listed above. The request should set forth the specific reasons why a hearing on this application would be appropriate.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Amy Hapeman or Malcolm Mohead, (301) 427-8401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The subject modification to Permit No. 19621, issued on June 16, 2016 (81 FR 43589) is requested under the authority of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (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).

Permit No. 19621 authorizes the Dr. Arendt to study loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*), Kemp's ridley (*Lepidochelys kempii*), green (*Chelonia mydas*), and leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*) sea turtles in the waters of Florida, Georgia and South Carolina. Researchers may capture animals by trawl or tangle net and perform the following procedures before release: Morphometrics, tagging, photography, biological sampling, ultrasound, marking, laparoscopy and associated transport, transmitter attachment, and/or epibiota removal. A limited number of sea turtles may accidentally die due to capture over the life of the permit. The permit holder requests authorization to: (1) take olive ridley sea turtles (*L. olivacea*) during all research projects for rare captures that could occur; (2) expand Project 3's area to include coastal shoals adjacent to the Cape Canaveral channel; (3) extend Project 3's duration through October 2020; and (4) increase the annual take of green and loggerhead sea turtles by four and nine turtles, respectively, and authorize double tagging and tissue sampling of a small subset of these animals. Project 3 changes would allow for new collaborations and funding sources to meet the existing objectives to assess the distribution, relative

abundance, demographic structure, and health of foraging sea turtles in these waters. The permit expires on June 15, 2021.

Dated: November 16, 2016.

Julia Harrison,

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

[FR Doc. 2016-27975 Filed 11-18-16; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XF052

Western 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 and scoping sessions.

SUMMARY: The Western Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) will hold public meetings and scoping sessions to discuss fishery management regulations for the Monument Expanded Area in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands.

DATES: The Council will hold meetings in Hawaii from Tuesday, December 6 through Saturday, December 17, 2016. For specific dates, times and agendas, see **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**.

ADDRESSES: The meetings will be held in Hilo, Kona, Kahului, Maui, Lihue, Kauai, Honolulu, Oahu, Kaunakakai, Molokai, HI. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** for specific locations of the meetings.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kitty M. Simonds, Executive Director, Western Pacific Fishery Management Council; telephone: (808) 522-8220.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Council will hold meetings in Hilo, HI, on Tuesday, December 6, 2016, between 6 p.m. and 9 p.m.; in Kona, HI, on Wednesday, December 7, 2016, between 6 p.m. and 9 p.m.; in Kahului, Maui, HI, on Thursday, December 8, 2016, between 6 p.m. and 9 p.m.; in Lihue, Kauai, HI on Tuesday, December 13, 2016, between 6 p.m. and 9 p.m.; in Honolulu, Oahu, HI, on Thursday, December 15, 2016, between 6 p.m. and 9 p.m.; and in Kaunakakai, Molokai, HI, on Saturday, December 17, 2016, between 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. All times listed are local island times.

The Hilo meeting will be held at the Hilo Intermediate School Cafeteria, 587 Waiuanue Ave, Hilo, HI 96720. The Kona meeting will be held at the West Hawaii Civic Center, Building G, 74-5044 Ane Keohokalole Hwy, Kailua-Kona, HI 96740. The Maui meeting will be held at the Courtyard Maui Kahului Airport, 532 Keolani Pl, Kahului, HI 96732. The Kauai meeting will be held at the Chiefess Kamakahahelei Middle School, 4431 Nuhou St, Lihue, HI 96766. The Oahu meeting will be held at the Ala Moana Hotel, 410 Atkinson Dr, Honolulu, HI 96814. The Molokai meeting will be held at Kaunakakai Elementary School Cafeteria, 30 Ailoa St, Kaunakakai, HI 96761.

Public scoping and comment periods will be provided in the agenda. The order in which agenda items are addressed may change. The meetings will run as late as necessary to complete scheduled business.

Schedule and Agenda for All Meetings

1. Visit Informational Booths
2. Informational Briefing on Presidential Proclamation, Council Role in Rule-making Process, Data Discovery
3. Public Comment/Scoping Session
4. Adjourn

Special Accommodations

These meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Kitty M. Simonds, (808) 522-8220 (voice) or (808) 522-8226 (fax), at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

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

Dated: November 16, 2016.

Tracey L. Thompson,

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

[FR Doc. 2016-27973 Filed 11-18-16; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XA774, 0648-XA806, and 0648-XE766

Marine Mammals and Endangered Species; File Nos. 13927, 16553, and 20532

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

ACTION: Notice; issuance of permits.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that permits or permit amendments have been issued to the following entities:

Permit No. 13927-03: James H.W. Hain, Ph.D., Associated Scientists at Woods Hole, Box 721, Woods Hole, MA 02543;

Permit No. 16553-01: Brent Stewart, Ph.D., J.D., Hubbs SeaWorld Research Institute, 2595 Ingraham Street, San Diego, CA 92109; and

Permit No. 20532: Stephen John Trumble, Ph.D., Baylor University, 101 Bagby Ave., Waco, TX 76706.

ADDRESSES: The permits and related documents are available for review upon written request or by appointment in the Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 13705, Silver Spring, MD 20910; phone (301) 427-8401; fax (301) 713-0376.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Carrie Hubard (File Nos. 13927-03, 16553-01) and Shasta McClenahan or Jennifer Skidmore (File No. 20532) at (301) 427-8401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Requests for a permit or permit amendment had been submitted by the above-named applicants. The requested permits have been issued under the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended (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), as applicable.

Permit No. 13927-03: The original permit (No. 13927), issued on October 19, 2011 (76 FR 67151, October 31, 2016) authorized Dr. Hain to conduct aerial and vessel surveys to study North Atlantic right whales (*Eubalaena glacialis*), Humpback whales (*Megaptera novaeangliae*), bottlenose dolphins (*Tursiops truncatus*) and Atlantic spotted dolphins (*Stenella frontalis*) may be incidentally harassed. Research may occur annually, December through April off the U.S. southeast coast. Two subsequent amendments (13927-01 issued January 13, 2013 and 13927-02 issued December 1, 2015) increased the number of North Atlantic right whale takes and added unmanned aircraft systems, respectively. The minor amendment (No. 13927-03) extends the duration of the permit through October 31, 2017, but does not change any other terms or conditions of the permit.

Permit No. 16553-01: The original permit (No. 16553), issued on October