

day notice of our intent to request renewal of information collection authority from OMB. In that notice, we solicited public comments for 60 days ending on June 29, 2004. We received two comments, both from the same individual, regarding this **Federal Register** notice. The comments expressed opposition to the collection of the information as described in the notice. Comments were based on the premise that the terminology is misleading and that the information provided to the Service is inaccurate. We note the concerns raised by this individual; however, we believe this collection of the information provides an important means to measure the legal subsistence harvest of polar bear, sea otter, and walrus and to improve the quality and quantity of harvest and biological data used in management decisions. In addition, we believe the information provided by the participants is accurate.

In October 1988, pursuant to provisions of section 109(i) of the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) of 1972, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1361–1407), we implemented formal marking, tagging, and reporting regulations at 50 CFR 18.23(f) for Alaska Natives harvesting polar bear, northern sea otter, and Pacific walrus in Alaska. Under section 101(b) of the MMPA, Alaska Natives residing in Alaska and dwelling on the coast of the North Pacific or Arctic Ocean may harvest these species for subsistence or handicraft purposes. Section 109(i) of the MMPA authorized us, acting on behalf of the Secretary of the Interior, to prescribe marking, tagging, and reporting regulations applicable to this Native subsistence and handicraft take.

Our regulations have enabled us to gather data on the Native subsistence and handicraft harvest and on the biology of polar bear, sea otter, and Pacific walrus in Alaska necessary to determine what effect such take is having on these populations. The regulations have also provided us with a means of monitoring the disposition of the harvest to ensure that any commercial use of products created from these species meets the criteria set forth in section 101(b) of the MMPA.

The information that we propose to continue to collect from Alaska Natives will be used to improve our decisionmaking ability by substantially expanding the quality and quantity of harvest and biological data upon which we can base future management decisions. It will provide us with the ability to make inferences about the condition and general health of these populations. Without authority to

collect this harvest information, our ability to measure the take of polar bear, sea otter, and walrus is inadequate. We believe that mandatory marking, tagging, and reporting is essential for us, in concert with Alaska Natives, to be able to improve the quality and quantity of harvest and biological data necessary to base future management decisions. It allows us to make rational, knowledgeable decisions regarding the Native harvest.

We estimate that the annual burden associated with this request will be 639 hours for each year of the 3-year period of OMB authorization. We calculated this estimated burden based on previous experience suggesting that Alaska Natives annually take about 2,556 polar bears, sea otter, and Pacific walrus for subsistence and handicraft purposes, and that 15 minutes will be needed to provide the required information for each animal taken.

*Title:* Marine Mammal Marking, Tagging, and Reporting Certificates, 50 CFR 18.23(f).

*OMB Control Number:* 1018–0066.

*Form numbers:* R7–50, R7–51, and R7–52.

*Frequency of collection:* Occasional.

*Description of respondents:* Individuals and households.

*Total annual responses:* 2,556.

*Total annual burden hours:* 639 hours.

As with our 60-day notice, this notice invites your comments on: (1) Whether or not this collection of information is necessary for us to properly perform our functions, including whether or not this information will have practical utility; (2) the accuracy of our estimate of burden, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions we use; (3) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information we are proposing to collect; and (4) ways for us to minimize the burden of the collection of information on people who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Dated: October 5, 2004.

**Hope Grey,**

*Information Collection Clearance Officer,  
Fish and Wildlife Service.*

[FR Doc. 04–23988 Filed 10–26–04; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4310–55–P**

## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Fish and Wildlife Service

#### Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force Meeting

**AGENCY:** Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice of meeting.

**SUMMARY:** This notice announces a meeting of the Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS) Task Force. The meeting topics are identified in the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section.

**DATES:** The Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force will meet from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Tuesday, November 16, 2004 and 8:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Wednesday, November 17, 2004. Minutes of the meeting will be available for public inspection during regular business hours, Monday through Friday.

**ADDRESSES:** The Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force meeting will be held at the Marriott Crystal Gateway, 1700 Jefferson Davis Highway, Arlington, VA 22202. Phone (703) 920–3230. Minutes of the meeting will be maintained in the office of Chief, Division of Environmental Quality, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Suite 322, 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Arlington, Virginia 22203–1622.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Everett Wilson, Acting Executive Secretary, Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force, at (703) 358–2148.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Pursuant to section 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App. I), this notice announces meetings of the Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force. The Task Force was established by the Nonindigenous Aquatic Nuisance Prevention and Control Act of 1990.

Topics to be covered during the ANS Task Force meeting include: a discussion of the implementation of the ANSTF Strategic Plan; ANSTF Committee and Regional Panel reports; a presentation on the draft National Management Plan for the genus *Caulerpa*; and a presentation of a new public awareness campaign.

Dated: October 15, 2004.

**Mamie A. Parker,**

*Co-Chair, Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force, Assistant Director—Fisheries & Habitat Conservation.*

[FR Doc. 04–23989 Filed 10–26–04; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4510–55–P**