

operations on the aforementioned ships. The application's take estimates are based on 16 nominal 9-day active sonar missions (or equivalent shorter missions) between both vessels, regardless of which vessel is performing a specific mission, not to exceed a total of 432 hours of LFA sonar transmission time combined for both vessels.

The specified geographic regions identified in the application are the following oceanographic provinces described in Longhurst (1998) and identified in 50 CFR 216.180(a): the Archipelagic Deep Basins Province, the Western Pacific Warm Pool Province, and the North Pacific Tropical Gyre West Province, all within the Pacific Trade Wind Biome; the Kuroshio Current Province and the Northern Pacific Transition Zone Province within the Pacific Westerly Winds Biome; the North Pacific Epicontinental Sea Province within the Pacific Polar Biome; and the China Sea Coastal Province within the North Pacific Coastal Biome. The operational areas are portions of the provinces but do not encompass the entire area of the provinces. Due to critical naval warfare requirements, the U.S. Navy has identified the necessity for both SURTASS LFA sonar vessels to be stationed in the North Pacific Ocean during fiscal year 2006.

Monitoring and Reporting

In compliance with the two LOAs issued in 2005, on June 9, 2006, the Navy submitted an annual report on SURTASS LFA sonar operations and the mitigation and monitoring activities conducted under those LOAs. A copy of that report (Navy, 2006) can be downloaded at: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/permits/incidental.htm#applications>.

Authorization

NMFS has issued two LOAs to the U.S. Navy, authorizing the incidental harassment of marine mammals incidental to operating the two SURTASS LFA sonar systems for training, testing and routine military operations. Issuance of these two LOAs is based on findings, described in the preamble to the final rule (67 FR 46712, July 16, 2002) and supported by information contained in the Navy's required annual report on SURTASS LFA sonar, that the activities described under these two LOAs will have no more than a negligible impact on marine mammal stocks and will not have an unmitigable adverse impact on the availability of the affected marine mammal stocks for subsistence uses.

These LOAs remain valid through August 15, 2007, provided the Navy

remains in conformance with the conditions of the regulations and the LOAs, and the mitigation, monitoring, and reporting requirements described in 50 CFR 216.184-216.186 (67 FR 46712, July 16, 2002) and in the LOAs are undertaken.

Dated: August 15, 2006.

James H. Lecky,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 081406B]

Endangered Species; Permit No. 1574

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

ACTION: Notice; Issuance of permit.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that a scientific research permit to take shortnose sturgeon (*Acipenser brevirostrum*) has been issued to Dr. Frank A. Chapman, Department of Fisheries & Aquatic Sciences, University of Florida, 7922 NW 71st Street, Gainesville, Florida 32653.

ADDRESSES: The permit and related documents are available for review upon written request or by appointment in the following offices:

Permits, Conservation and Education Division, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 13705, Silver Spring, MD 20910; phone (301)713-2289; fax (301)427-2521; and Southeast Region, NMFS, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, FL 33701; phone (727)824-5312; fax (727)824-5309.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jennifer Skidmore or Kate Swails at (301)713-2289.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The requested permit has been issued under the 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 parts 222-226).

On May 10, 2006, notice was published in the **Federal Register** (71 FR 27230) that a request for a scientific research permit to take shortnose sturgeon had been submitted by Dr. Frank A. Chapman. Dr. Chapman will use 187 captive shortnose sturgeon

presently held at the University of Florida to meet the following objectives: (1) identify physical, chemical, and biological parameters required to maintain optimal survival and growth of larvae and juvenile shortnose sturgeon; (2) describe embryonic development and metamorphosis; (3) monitor gonadal development of domestically raised shortnose sturgeon; (4) develop chemical assays to identify the sex and monitor the sexual development of shortnose sturgeon; and (5) understand the physiology of the sperm and egg to develop short and long-term storage of sperm as well as optimum fertilization techniques. The permit has been issued for five years.

Issuance of this permit, as required by the ESA, was based on a finding that such permits (1) were applied for in good faith, (2) will not operate to the disadvantage of such endangered or threatened species, and (3) are consistent with the purposes and policies set forth in section 2 of the ESA.

Dated: August 16, 2006.

P. Michael Payne,

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

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COMMITTEE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TEXTILE AGREEMENTS

Request for Public Comment on Commercial Availability Request under the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)

August 16, 2006.

AGENCY: The Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements (CITA).

ACTION: Request for Public Comments concerning a request for modification of the NAFTA rules of origin for filament yarn of cellulose acetate.

SUMMARY: On July 21, 2006 the Government of the United States received a request from the Government of Mexico alleging that filament yarn of cellulose acetate, classified in heading 5403 of the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States (HTSUS), cannot be supplied by the Mexican industry in commercial quantities in a timely manner and requesting that the governments of Canada and the United States consult to consider whether the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) rule of origin for woven fabrics classified under HTSUS heading