

Pacific Islands Region, NMFS, 1601 Kapiolani Blvd. Rm. 1110, Honolulu, HI 96814-4700; *phone* (808) 944-2200; *fax* (808) 973-2941;

Northeast Region, NMFS, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930; *phone* (978) 281-9328; *fax* (978) 281-9394; and

Southeast Region, NMFS, 263 13th Avenue South, Saint Petersburg, FL 33701; *phone* (727) 824-5312; *fax* (727) 824-5309.

Dated: November 1, 2011.

P. Michael Payne,

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

[FR Doc. 2011-28771 Filed 11-4-11; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XA810

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice of a public meeting.

SUMMARY: The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council's (Council) Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) will hold a public meeting.

DATES: The meeting will be held on Monday, December 5, 2011, from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held via webinar with a telephone-only connection option. Details on webinar registration and the telephone-only connection details are available at: <http://www.mafmc.org>.

Council address: Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, 800 North State Street, Suite 201, Dover, DE 19901; telephone: (302) 674-2331.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Christopher M. Moore, Ph.D., Executive Director, Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, 800 North State Street, Suite 201, Dover, DE 19901; telephone: (302) 674-2331, extension 255.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The purpose of the meeting is to reconsider the 2012 ABC recommendations made to the Council for summer flounder and scup based on updated stock assessment information recently provided for both species by the Northeast Fisheries Science Center. Information about

accessing the webinar can be obtained by visiting the Council's Web site at www.mafmc.org.

Special Accommodations

The meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to M. Jan Saunders at the Mid-Atlantic Council Office, (302) 526-5251, at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

Dated: November 1, 2011.

Tracey L. Thompson,

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

[FR Doc. 2011-28659 Filed 11-4-11; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XA806

Marine Mammals; File No. 16553

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 permit has been issued to Brent Stewart, Ph.D., J.D., Hubbs SeaWorld Research Institute, 2595 Ingraham Street, San Diego, CA 92109 to conduct research on California sea lions (*Zalophus californianus*), northern elephant seals (*Mirounga angustirostris*), and harbor seals (*Phoca vitulina*).

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

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; and

Southwest Region, NMFS, 501 West Ocean Blvd., Suite 4200, Long Beach, CA 90802-4213; *phone* (562) 980-4001; *fax* (562) 980-4018.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Carrie Hubard or Amy Sloan, (301) 427-8401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On August 17, 2011, notice was published in the **Federal Register** (76 FR 51002) that a request for a permit to conduct research on three pinniped species had been submitted by the above-named applicant. The requested permit has been issued under the authority of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972,

as amended (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*) and the regulations governing the taking and importing of marine mammals (50 CFR part 216).

Permit No. 16553 authorizes Dr. Stewart to continue a long term study on the comparative ecology, demography, community ecology, foraging patterns, pathology and phenology of pinniped species in California and to further characterize the resources and habitats used by each species. California sea lions, northern elephant seals, and harbor seals may be captured and sampled at several sites: San Nicolas Island, San Miguel Island, Santa Rosa Island, Santa Cruz Island, Piedras Blancas, Cape San Martin, and Gorda. Some animals will only receive a flipper tag or a dye mark. Other animals may be physically or chemically restrained; measured and weighed; have a variety of samples taken, including: Blood, skin, blubber, and mucus membrane swabs; and have tracking or data recording instruments attached. The permit also authorizes up to four unintentional research-related mortalities of each species annually. The permit is valid through October 31, 2016.

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), a final determination has been made that the activity proposed is categorically excluded from the requirement to prepare an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement.

Dated: November 1, 2011.

P. Michael Payne,

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

[FR Doc. 2011-28768 Filed 11-4-11; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XT82

Marine Mammals; File No. 14676

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

ACTION: Notice; receipt of application for permit amendment.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that Paul Ponganis, Ph.D., University of California at San Diego, La Jolla, CA, has applied for an amendment to Scientific Research Permit No. 14676.

DATES: Written, telefaxed, or email comments must be received on or before December 7, 2011.

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. 14676 from the list of available applications.

These documents are also available upon written request or by appointment in the following offices:

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; and

Southwest Region, NMFS, 501 West Ocean Blvd., Suite 4200, Long Beach, CA 90802-4213; *phone* (562) 980-4001; *fax* (562) 980-4018.

Written comments on this application should be submitted to the Chief, Permits, Conservation and Education 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, Conservation and Education 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: Tammy Adams or Amy Sloan, (301) 427-8401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The subject amendment to Permit No. 14676 is requested under the authority of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*), and the regulations governing the taking and importing of marine mammals (50 CFR part 216).

Permit No. 14676, issued on January 13, 2010 (75 FR 4046), authorizes the permit holder to capture up to 10 California sea lions (*Zalophus californianus*) annually on San Nicolas Island off the coast of California for attachment and retrieval of instruments to study the role of blood oxygen store depletion in the dive behavior and foraging ecology of California sea lions. The permit also authorizes harassment of up to 6,000 California sea lions, 500 harbor seals (*Phoca vitulina*), 1,000 northern elephant seals (*Mirounga angustirostris*), and 150 northern fur seals (*Callorhinus ursinus*) annually incidental to the capture operations.

The permit is valid until February 1, 2015.

The permit holder is requesting the permit be amended to include authorization for an additional procedure, deployment of a heart rate/stroke rate recorder, on up to 30 animals over the two field seasons. For this procedure, the holder requests permission to capture an additional 5 animals per year, for a total of 15 per year. The amendment would be valid through the expiration date of the original permit. The objective of this additional procedure is to further investigate the relationship of heart rate and flipper stroke rate patterns to the arterial and venous blood oxygen profiles during deep versus shallow dives.

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

Dated: November 2, 2011.

P. Michael Payne,

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

[FR Doc. 2011-28780 Filed 11-4-11; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XA507

Takes of Marine Mammals Incidental to Specified Activities; Low-Energy Marine Geophysical Survey in the Western Tropical Pacific Ocean, November to December 2011

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

ACTION: Notice; issuance of an incidental take authorization (ITA).

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) regulation, notification is hereby given that NMFS has issued an Incidental Harassment Authorization (IHA) to Scripps Institution of Oceanography (SIO) to take marine

mammals, by Level B harassment, incidental to conducting a low-energy marine geophysical (i.e., seismic) survey in the western tropical Pacific Ocean, November to December 2011.

DATES: Effective November 5, 2011 through January 31, 2012.

ADDRESSES: A copy of the IHA and application are available by writing to P. Michael Payne, Chief, Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910 or by telephoning the contacts listed here.

A copy of the IHA application containing a list of the references used in this document may be obtained by writing to the above address, telephoning the contact listed here (see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**) or visiting the Internet at: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/permits/incidental.htm#applications>.

The following associated documents are also available at the same Internet address: "Environmental Assessment Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act, 42 U.S.C. 4321, *et seq.* and Executive Order 12114, Marine Geophysical Survey by the R/V *Thompson* in the western tropical Pacific Ocean, November-December 2011 (EA)" prepared by the National Science Foundation (NSF), and "Environmental Assessment of a Low-Energy Marine Geophysical Survey by the R/V *Thompson* in the Western Tropical Pacific Ocean, November-December 2011," prepared by LGL Ltd., Environmental Research Associates (LGL), on behalf of NSF. The NMFS Biological Opinion will be available online at: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/consultation/opinions.htm>. Documents cited in this notice may be viewed, by appointment, during regular business hours, at the aforementioned address.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Howard Goldstein or Jolie Harrison, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, (301) 427-8401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Section 101(a)(5)(D) of the MMPA (16 U.S.C. 1371(a)(5)(D)) directs the Secretary of Commerce (Secretary) to authorize, upon request, the incidental, but not intentional, taking of small numbers of marine mammals of a species or population stock, by United States citizens who engage in a specified activity (other than commercial fishing) within a specified geographical region if certain findings are made and, if the taking is limited to harassment, a notice