

from the resulting list and click on the "Submit a Comment" icon on the right of that line.

- *Mail or hand-delivery:* Angela Somma, National Marine Fisheries Service, Office of Protected Resources, Endangered Species Division, 1325 East West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910.

*Instructions:* Comments must be submitted by one of the above methods to ensure that the comments are received, documented, and considered by NMFS. Comments sent by any other method, to any other address or individual, or received after the end of the comment period, may not be considered. All comments received are a part of the public record and will generally be posted for public viewing on [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) without change. All personal identifying information (e.g., name, address, etc.) submitted voluntarily by the sender will be publicly accessible. Do not submit confidential business information, or otherwise sensitive or protected information. NMFS will accept anonymous comments (enter "N/A" in the required fields if you wish to remain anonymous). Attachments to electronic comments will be accepted in Microsoft Word or Excel, WordPerfect, or Adobe PDF file formats only.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Larissa Plants, Office of Protected Resources, 301-427-8471.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Section 4(c)(2)(A) of the ESA requires that we conduct a review of listed species at least once every five years. The regulations in 50 CFR 424.21 require that we publish a notice in the **Federal Register** announcing those species currently under active review. This notice announces our active review of the Kemp's ridley, olive ridley, leatherback, and hawksbill sea turtles.

#### Public Solicitation of New Information

To ensure that the 5-year review is complete and based on the best available scientific and commercial information, we are soliciting new information from the public, governmental agencies, Tribes, the scientific community, industry, environmental entities, and any other interested parties concerning the status of Kemp's ridley, olive ridley, leatherback, and hawksbill sea turtles. The 5-year review considers the best scientific and commercial data and all new information that has become available since the listing determination or most recent status review. Categories of requested information include: (1) Species biology including, but not

limited to, population trends, distribution, abundance, demographics, and genetics; (2) habitat conditions including, but not limited to, amount, distribution, and suitability; (3) conservation measures that have been implemented that benefit the species; (4) status and trends of threats; and (5) other new information, data, or corrections including, but not limited to, taxonomic or nomenclatural changes, identification of erroneous information contained in the List of Endangered and Threatened Species, and improved analytical methods.

Any new information will be considered during the 5-year review and will also be useful in evaluating the ongoing recovery program for these sea turtles. For example, information on conservation measures will assist in tracking implementation of recovery actions.

**Authority:** 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*

Dated: October 3, 2012.

**Heather Coll,**

*Acting Chief, Endangered Species Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.*

[FR Doc. 2012-24935 Filed 10-9-12; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3510-22-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

#### National Climate Assessment and Development Advisory Committee; Meeting

**AGENCY:** Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Commerce (DOC).

**ACTION:** Notice of open meeting.

**SUMMARY:** This notice sets forth the schedule of a forthcoming meeting of the DoC NOAA National Climate Assessment and Development Advisory Committee (NCADAC).

**DATES:** *Time and Date:* The meeting will be held Wednesday, October 24, 2012 from 3-5 p.m. Eastern time.

**PLACE:** This meeting will be a conference call. Public access will be available at the office of the U.S. Global Change Research Program, Conference Room A, Suite 250, 1717 Pennsylvania Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20006. The public will not be able to dial into the call. Please check the National Climate Assessment Web site for additional information at <http://www.globalchange.gov/what-we-do/assessment>.

#### Status

The meeting will be open to public participation with a 10-minute public comment period from 4:45-4:55 p.m. The NCADAC expects that public statements presented at its meetings will not be repetitive of previously submitted verbal or written statements. In general, each individual or group making a verbal presentation will be limited to a total time of two minutes. Written comments should be received in the NCADAC DFO's office by Friday, October 19, 2012, to provide sufficient time for NCADAC review. Written comments received by the NCADAC DFO after Friday, October 19, 2012, will be distributed to the NCADAC, but may not be reviewed prior to the meeting date.

#### Special Accommodations

These meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for special accommodations may be directed no later than 12 p.m. on Friday, October 19, 2012, to Dr. Cynthia Decker, Designated Federal Official, National Climate Assessment and Development Advisory Committee, NOAA, Rm. 11230, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910, (Phone: 301-734-1156, Fax: 301-713-1459, Email: [Cynthia.Decker@noaa.gov](mailto:Cynthia.Decker@noaa.gov).)

#### Matters to be Considered

Please refer to the Web page <http://www.nesdis.noaa.gov/NCADAC/index.html> for the most up-to-date meeting agenda, when available.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The National Climate Assessment and Development Advisory Committee was established in December 2010. The committee's mission is to synthesize and summarize the science and information pertaining to current and future impacts of climate change upon the United States; and to provide advice and recommendations toward the development of an ongoing, sustainable national Assessment of global change impacts and adaptation and mitigation strategies for the Nation. Within the scope of its mission, the committee's specific objective is to produce a National Climate Assessment.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Dr. Cynthia Decker, Designated Federal Official, National Climate Assessment and Development Advisory Committee, NOAA, Rm. 11230, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910, (Phone: 301-734-1156, Fax: 301-713-1459, Email: [Cynthia.Decker@noaa.gov](mailto:Cynthia.Decker@noaa.gov).)

Dated: October 3, 2012.

**Andy Baldus,**

Acting Chief Financial Officer/Chief Administrative Officer, Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

[FR Doc. 2012-24866 Filed 10-9-12; 8:45 am]

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**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

RIN 0648-XA969

**Takes of Marine Mammals Incidental to Specified Activities; Taking Marine Mammals Incidental to Abalone Research on San Nicolas Island, CA**

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

**ACTION:** Notice; issuance of an incidental harassment authorization.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the regulations implementing the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) as amended, notification is hereby given that we have issued an incidental harassment authorization (IHA) to Dr. Glenn R. VanBlaricom (VanBlaricom) to incidentally harass, by Level B harassment only, several species of marine mammal incidental to abalone research surveys on San Nicolas Island (SNI).

**DATES:** This authorization is effective for a period of 1 year from the date of issuance.

**ADDRESSES:** A copy of the IHA and related documents may be obtained by visiting the Internet at: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/permits/incidental.htm>. Associated documents prepared pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) are also available at the same site. For those members of the public unable to view these documents on the internet, a copy may be obtained by writing to Michael Payne, Chief, Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910 or telephoning the contact listed below (see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**). Documents may also be viewed, by appointment only, at the aforementioned address.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Ben Laws, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, (301) 427-8401.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**Background**

Sections 101(a)(5)(A) and (D) of the MMPA (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*) direct the Secretary of Commerce to allow, upon request, the incidental, but not intentional, taking of small numbers of marine mammals by U.S. citizens who engage in a specified activity (other than commercial fishing) within a specified geographical region if certain findings are made and either regulations are issued or, if the taking is limited to harassment, a notice of a proposed authorization is provided to the public for review.

Authorization for incidental takings shall be granted if NMFS finds that the taking will have a negligible impact on the species or stock(s), will not have an unmitigable adverse impact on the availability of the species or stock(s) for subsistence uses (where relevant), and if the permissible methods of taking and requirements pertaining to the mitigation, monitoring and reporting of such takings are set forth. NMFS has defined "negligible impact" in 50 CFR part 216 as "an impact resulting from the specified activity that cannot be reasonably expected to, and is not reasonably likely to, adversely affect the species or stock through effects on annual rates of recruitment or survival."

Section 101(a)(5)(D) of the MMPA established an expedited process by which citizens of the U.S. can apply for an authorization to incidentally take small numbers of marine mammals by harassment. Section 101(a)(5)(D) establishes a 45-day time limit for NMFS review of an application followed by a 30-day public notice and comment period on any proposed authorizations for the incidental harassment of marine mammals. Within 45 days of the close of the comment period, NMFS must either issue or deny the authorization. Except with respect to certain activities not pertinent here, the MMPA defines "harassment" as: "any act of pursuit, torment, or annoyance which (i) has the potential to injure a marine mammal or marine mammal stock in the wild [Level A harassment]; or (ii) has the potential to disturb a marine mammal or marine mammal stock in the wild by causing disruption of behavioral patterns, including, but not limited to, migration, breathing, nursing, breeding, feeding, or sheltering [Level B harassment]."

**Summary of Request**

On October 26, 2011, NMFS received a complete application from VanBlaricom for the taking, by Level B harassment only, of marine mammals incidental to research surveys

investigating the black abalone (*Haliotis cracherodii*). The first of five IHAs for similar research activities was issued to VanBlaricom on September 23, 2003 (68 FR 57427; October 3, 2003); the most recent of these was issued on January 18, 2008 (73 FR 4841; January 28, 2008), expiring January 17, 2009.

Authorization for incidental take, by Level B harassment only, was requested for small numbers of California sea lions (*Zalophus californianus*), harbor seals (*Phoca vitulina*), and northern elephant seals (*Mirounga angustirostris*). The take is expected to occur incidental to research surveys performed for the purpose of assessing trends in black abalone populations over time in permanent study sites, and to conduct related research on the biology and ecology of black abalones relevant to current conservation concerns for the species, at San Nicolas Island (SNI), Ventura County, California. The specified activity consists of researchers on foot counting black abalones in plots along established transect lines at each of nine permanent study sites. Visits are generally made to each site on SNI up to four times per year in order to complete standardized annual black abalone surveys. VanBlaricom plans to conduct additional studies of growth and mortality rates, as well as genetic studies, necessitating as many as five visits per year to certain sites.

**Description of the Specified Activity**

Long-term study of abalone population trends began in 1979 due to interest in relocation of southern sea otters (*Enhydra lutris nereis*) to SNI. Following two seasons of reconnaissance surveys (1979-80), quantitative survey effort started in 1981, when nine permanent research sites in rocky intertidal habitats were chosen based on the presence of relatively dense abalone aggregations in order to monitor changes over time. From September 1979 through October 2011, VanBlaricom has made 137 separate field trips to SNI, with a total of 723 days of survey work. The specified activity and specific geographic region were described in greater detail in the **Federal Register** notice of proposed authorization (hereafter, the FR notice; 77 FR 12246; February 29, 2012) and will not be repeated here.

Research is conducted by counting black abalone in plots along permanent transect lines in rocky intertidal habitats at each of the nine study sites (see Figure 1 of VanBlaricom's application for a map of the study sites). Survey work is typically done by two field biologists working on foot (sites are