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[FR Doc. 2012-27696 Filed 11-13-12; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XC342

Endangered and Threatened Species; Take of Anadromous Fish

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

ACTION: Notice of receipt of a permit application; request for comments.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that NMFS has received an application for a permit (Permit 15610) to conduct research for scientific purposes from the Oregon State University, Department of Fisheries and Wildlife (OSU). The requested permit would affect the endangered Southern California (SC) Distinct Population Segment (DPS) of steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*). The public is hereby notified of the availability of the permit application for review and comment before NMFS either approves or disapproves the application.

DATES: Written comments on the permit application must be received at the appropriate address or fax number (see **ADDRESSES**) on or before December 14, 2012.

ADDRESSES: Written comments on the permit application should be sent to Matt McGoogan, Protected Resources Division, NMFS, 501 W. Ocean Blvd., Suite 4200, Long Beach, CA 90802. Comments may also be sent using email FRNpermits.1b@noaa.gov or fax (562.980.4027). The permit application is available for review, by appointment, at the foregoing address and is also available for review online at the Authorizations and Permits for Protected Species Web site at <https://apps.nmfs.noaa.gov>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Matt McGoogan at phone number (562) 980-4026 or email: matthew.mcgoogan@noaa.gov.

Authority

Issuance of permits, as required by the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531-1543) (ESA), is based on a

finding that such permits: (1) are applied for in good faith; (2) would not operate to the disadvantage of the listed species which are the subject of the permits; and (3) are consistent with the purposes and policies set forth in Section 2 of the ESA. Authority to take listed species is subject to conditions set forth in the permits. Permits are issued in accordance with and are subject to the ESA and NMFS regulations governing listed fish and wildlife permits (50 CFR parts 222-226).

Those individuals requesting a hearing on an application listed in this notice should provide the specific reasons why a hearing on that application would be appropriate (see **ADDRESSES**). The holding of such a hearing is at the discretion of the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, NOAA. All statements and opinions contained in the permit action summaries are those of the applicant and do not necessarily reflect the views of NMFS.

Permit Application Received

OSU has applied for a permit (Permit 15610) to study steelhead in the Ventura River watershed in Ventura County, California. The primary objectives of this study are to (1) determine if population genetic structure exists in the steelhead and rainbow trout subpopulations in the Ventura Basin, (2) determine smoltification patterns of steelhead and rainbow trout in the Ventura Basin and influence between the two life history forms, and (3) determine downstream migration patterns for steelhead and rainbow trout and how those patterns may be influenced by environmental conditions. Research activities include (1) Monitoring water temperature, (2) capturing smolts and adult steelhead in a migrant trap at the Robles Diversion Dam, (3) capturing smolts and juvenile steelhead using a seine in the Ventura River estuary, (4) capturing smolts and juvenile steelhead by electrofishing pre-determined sample sites throughout the Ventura River watershed, (5) recording weight and length of smolts and juvenile steelhead, (6) removing tissue (gill and fin clip) samples from smolts and juvenile steelhead, (7) analyzing fin clips for genetic structure, (8) analyzing gill samples for ATPase (decomposition of adenosine triphosphate (ATP) into adenosine diphosphate and a free phosphate ion) as an indicator of smoltification, and (9) inserting Passive Integrated Transponder (PIT) tags into smolts and juvenile steelhead. Field activities for the proposed research will occur between December 2012 and May 2014. For the proposed study, OSU has

requested non-lethal capture and release of up to 210 juvenile steelhead (30 juvenile steelhead from 7 different sites over the course of 1 year) for the purpose of genetic sampling (fin clip), the capture and release of up to 684 steelhead smolts (342 smolts annually over 2 years of sampling) and 304 juvenile steelhead (152 juvenile steelhead annually over 2 years of sampling) for the purpose of PIT tagging and tissue (gill/ATPase) sampling, capture and release of up to 10 adult steelhead (5 adults annually over 2 years of sampling) for genetic sampling (fin clip), and up to 40 tissue samples (fin clip) from adult steelhead carcasses (20 adult carcasses annually over 2 years of sampling). The unintentional lethal take that may occur as a result of research activities is a total of 9 juvenile steelhead and 16 steelhead smolts. Overall, no intentional lethal take of steelhead is expected in association with any aspect of these research activities. See the permit application for greater details on the study and related methodology.

Dated: November 8, 2012.

Angela Somma,

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

[FR Doc. 2012-27665 Filed 11-13-12; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XC343

Endangered and Threatened Species; Take of Anadromous Fish

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

ACTION: Issuance of a scientific research permit, and notice of availability for final environmental assessment and finding of no significant impact.

SUMMARY: This notice is hereby given that NMFS has issued Permit 14868 to Mr. Robert Clark, Assistant Regional Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), in accordance with the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA). In addition, the Final Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact associated with this permit are available to the public.

ADDRESSES: The approved application for the permit is available on the Applications and Permits for Protected

Species (APPS), <https://apps.nmfs.noaa.gov> Web site by searching the permit number within the Search Database page. The application, issued permit, Final Environmental Assessment, Finding of No Significant Impact and supporting documents are also available by appointment, or upon the following:

- **Mail:** Submit written requests to Elif Fehm-Sullivan, Fisheries Biologist, Protected Resources Division, Southwest Region, National Marine Fisheries Service, 650 Capitol Mall, Suite 5-100, Sacramento, CA 95814.

- **Fax:** (916) 930-3629.

- **Email:** SJRspring.salmon@noaa.gov.

You may access a copy of Final EA by one of the following:

- Visit the NMFS Reintroduction Web site at <http://swr.nmfs.noaa.gov/sjrrestorationprogram/salmonreintroduction.htm>.

- Call (916) 930-3723 and request to have a CD or hard copy mailed to you.

- Obtain a CD or hard copy by visiting the NMFS Central Valley office at 650 Capitol Mall, Suite 5-100, Sacramento, CA 95814.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Elif Fehm-Sullivan, National Marine Fisheries Service, 650 Capitol Mall, Suite 5-100, Sacramento, CA 95814 (916-930-3723).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Authority

The issuance of permits and permit modifications, as required by the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531-1543) (ESA), is based on a finding that such permits/modifications: (1) Are applied for in good faith; (2) would not operate to the disadvantage of the listed species which are the subject of the permits; and (3) are consistent with the purposes and policies set forth in section 2 of the ESA. Authority to take listed species is subject to conditions set forth in the permits. Permits and modifications are issued in accordance with and are subject to the ESA and NMFS regulations (50 CFR parts 222-226) governing listed fish and wildlife permits.

Species Covered in This Notice

This notice is relevant to ESA listed species from the Central Valley spring-run Chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*) (spring-run Chinook) evolutionarily significant unit (ESU).

Permit 14868

NMFS formally initiated a public review period for review of the permit application through publication of a Notice of Receipt (NOR) of the Permit

application in the **Federal Register** on February 4, 2011, outlining the research and enhancement activities proposed by FWS and take of ESA-listed spring-run Chinook proposed under Permit 14868 (76 FR 64005). The notice of receipt included a 30-day public comment period for this permit application, which closed on March 7, 2011. In addition, NMFS held public workshops for the section 10(a)(1)(A) permit application in Chico, California on February 3, 2011; in Fresno, California on February 7, 2011; and in Los Banos, California on February 8, 2011. A combined total of 113 public comments were submitted to NMFS by various entities on the permit application and each of these comments were considered when drafting the Environmental Assessment (EA).

NMFS formally initiated a public review period for the EA of the permit application through publication of a Notice of Availability (NOA) of the Permit application EA in the **Federal Register** on April 19, 2012, outlining the research and enhancement activities NMFS was proposing to allow under Permit 14868 (76 FR 23463). The notice of availability included a 30-day public comment period for this permit application EA, which closed on May 21, 2012. A combined total of 51 public comments were submitted to NMFS by various entities on the permit application EA and these comments with responses are incorporated in the Final EA.

Permit 14868 authorizes FWS, under the auspices of the San Joaquin River Restoration Project (SJRRP), to collect, transport, rear, and tag 560 Feather River Fish Hatchery (FRFH) Central Valley spring-run Chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*) eggs or juveniles during the first three years of the permit annually—and 2,760 eggs or juveniles in the fourth and fifth years, and establish broodstock in the Interim and Salmon Conservation and Research Facility (SCARF) facilities. In addition, the permit authorizes a low level of intentional mortality of 60 FRFH surplus juvenile spring-run Chinook salmon annually for pathogen analysis prior to transport to ensure that pathogens will not be transferred to either the Interim Facility or the SCARF.

Dated: November 8, 2012.

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

[FR Doc. 2012-27663 Filed 11-13-12; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XC139

Takes of Marine Mammals Incidental to Specified Activities; Taking Marine Mammals Incidental to Bird Mitigation Research in the Farallon National Wildlife Refuge

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 Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) implementing regulations, notification is hereby given that NMFS has issued an Incidental Harassment Authorization (IHA) to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, allowing the take of small numbers of marine mammals, by Level B harassment only, incidental to a bird mitigation research trial.

DATES: Effective November 7, 2012, through November 6, 2013.

ADDRESSES: A copy of the IHA, application, and Environmental Assessment are available by visiting the internet at: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/permits/incidental.htm>. Documents cited in this notice may also be viewed, by appointment, during regular business hours, at the aforementioned address.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Michelle Magliocca, 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