

undertaking is in everyone's best interest to avoid having problems emerge later as a project develops. If effects are identified, the Forest must reduce or eliminate those effects through avoidance, data recovery, or other forms of mitigation and in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office, Native American tribes, and interested parties. In order for you to be considered as a consulting party, you must submit a written request to me in response to this letter. Each request will be reviewed in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office, Tribal Historic Preservation Office and Native American tribes to determine which should be consulting parties.

A draft EIS will be filed with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and available for public review by June, 2018. The EPA will publish a Notice of Availability (NOA) of the draft EIS in the **Federal Register**. The final EIS is scheduled to be available September, 2018.

The comment period on the draft EIS will be 45 days from the date the EPA publishes the notice of availability in the **Federal Register**.

The Forest Service believes, at this early stage, it is important to give reviewers notice of several court rulings related to public participation in the environmental review process. First, reviewers of a draft EIS must structure their participation in the environmental review of the proposal so that it is meaningful and alerts an agency to the reviewer's position and contentions [*Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corp. v. NRDC*, 435 U.S. 519, 553 (1978)]. Also, environmental objections that could be raised at the draft EIS stage, but that are not raised until after completion of the final EIS, may be waived or dismissed by the courts [*City of Angoon v. Harris*, 490 F. Supp. 1334, 1338 (E.D. Wis. 1980)]. It is very important that those interested in this proposed action participate by the close of the 45-day comment period, so that substantive comments and objections are made available to the Forest Service at a time when it can meaningfully consider them and respond to them in the final EIS.

To assist the Forest Service in identifying and considering issues and concerns on the proposed action, comments on the draft EIS should be as specific as possible. It is also helpful if comments refer to specific pages or chapters of the draft statement.

Comments may also address the adequacy of the draft EIS of the merits of the alternatives formulated and discussed in the statement. Reviewers

may wish to refer to the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act at 40 CFR 1503.3 in addressing these points.

In the final EIS, the Forest Service is required to respond to substantive comments received during the comment period for the draft EIS. The Forest Service is the lead agency and the responsible official is the Forest Supervisor, Ochoco National Forest. The responsible official will decide whether and how to revise the Ochoco Wild Horse Herd Management Plan.

The Ochoco Wild Horse Herd Management Plan decision and the reasons for the decision will be documented in the record of decision. That decision will be subject to the Forest Service Project-level Predecisional Administrative Review Process ("Objection Process" at 36 CFR 218).

Dated: June 7, 2017.

**Jeanne M. Higgins,**

*Associate Deputy Chief, National Forest System.*

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**BILLING CODE 3411-15-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

**RIN 0648-XF490**

#### Surveys of Marine Recreational Fishing Effort on the U.S. Atlantic Coast and in the Gulf of Mexico; Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP); Center for Independent Experts; Public Meeting

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

**ACTION:** Notice of public meeting.

**SUMMARY:** NMFS is convening a peer review of a Calibration Model proposed by the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) to support its planned transition from a legacy telephone survey to a new mail survey for collecting data needed to estimate marine recreational fishing effort by shore and private/rental boat anglers on the Atlantic coast and in the Gulf of Mexico. The peer review includes reviewers appointed by the Center for Independent Experts (CIE), as well as reviewers selected by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission and the New England, Mid-Atlantic, South

Atlantic, and Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Councils. This notice lists the time and place of the Peer Review Workshop.

**DATES:** The Workshop will be held from 9 a.m. on June 27, 2017 until 12 p.m. on June 29, 2017.

**ADDRESSES:** The Workshop will be held at the Sheraton Hotel, 8777 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring, MD, 20910; Phone: 301/589-0800.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Dr. David Van Voorhees, Chief of Fisheries Statistics Division of NMFS Office of Science and Technology; phone 301/427-8189; FAX 301/427-4520; email: *Dave.Van.Voorhees@noaa.gov*.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Marine Recreational Information Program formed a Transition Team in 2015 to plan transitions from legacy survey designs to new, or improved, survey designs for monitoring marine recreational fishing effort and catch. The Transition Team consists of representatives from NOAA Fisheries, the regional fishery management councils, the interstate fisheries commissions, and several state marine fisheries agencies. The team prepared a transition plan for implementing a new mail survey called the "Fishing Effort Survey" to replace the legacy telephone survey called the "Coastal Household Telephone Survey". The plan requires development of a calibration model to account for consistent differences between the surveys in their statistical estimates of fishing effort.

The Peer Review Workshop will provide an assessment of the model developed by MRIP for this purpose. The product of the Workshop will be a Summary documenting panel opinions regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the proposed calibration model. The panel of reviewers will consist of three persons selected by the Center of Independent Experts, and four persons selected by the regional fishery management councils and ASMFC. The Panel will be chaired by an individual also selected by the councils and ASMFC. The Agenda is subject to change, and the latest version will be posted at <http://www.countryfish.noaa.gov>. The workshop will also be accessible by webinar in listen-only mode. Requests for webinar access should be directed to NMFS (see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**) three days prior to the workshop.

#### Special Accommodations

This workshop will be physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for auxiliary aids should be

directed to NMFS (see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**) three days prior to the meeting.

*Note:* The times and sequence specified in the agenda are subject to change.

**Authority:** 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: June 16, 2017.

**Ned Cyr,**

Director, Office of Science and Technology,  
National Marine Fisheries Service.

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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XF474

#### Endangered and Threatened Species; Initiation of 5-Year Reviews for the Endangered Baiji/Chinese River Dolphin/Yangtze River Dolphin and Endangered Saimaa Subspecies of Ringed Seal

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

**ACTION:** Notice of initiation of 5-year reviews; request for information.

**SUMMARY:** NMFS announces its intent to conduct 5-year reviews for the endangered Baiji/Chinese River Dolphin/Yangtze River Dolphin (*Lipotes vexillifer*), and the endangered Saimaa subspecies of ringed seal (*Phoca hispida saimensis*). NMFS is required by the ESA to conduct 5-year reviews to ensure that the listing classifications of the species are accurate. The 5-year reviews must be based on the best scientific and commercial data available at the time. We request submission of any such information on Baiji/Chinese River Dolphin/Yangtze River Dolphin and Saimaa ringed seal, particularly information on the status, threats, and recovery of the species that has become available since the previous status review for Baiji/Chinese River Dolphin/Yangtze River Dolphin in February 2012 and Saimaa seal in December 2010.

**DATES:** To allow us adequate time to conduct this review, we must receive your information no later than August 21, 2017. However, we will continue to accept new information about any listed species at any time.

**ADDRESSES:** You may submit information on this document identified by NOAA-NMFS-2017-0057 by either of the following methods:

- **Electronic Submission:** Submit electronic information via the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal. Go to [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov). To submit information via the e-Rulemaking Portal, first click the “submit a comment” icon, then enter NOAA-NMFS-2017-0057 in the keyword search. Locate the document you wish to respond to from the resulting list and click on the “Submit a Comment” icon on the right of that line.

- **Mail or Hand-Deliver:** Submit written comments to Endangered Species Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 13535, Silver Spring, MD 20910; Attn: Ron Dean.

**Instructions:** Information must be submitted by one of the above methods to ensure that the information is received, documented, and considered by NMFS. Information sent by any other method, to any other address or individual, or received after the end of the specified period, may not be considered. All information received is 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.), confidential business information, or otherwise sensitive or protected information submitted voluntarily by the sender will be publicly accessible. NMFS will accept anonymous submissions (enter “N/A” in the required fields if you wish to remain anonymous).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Ron Dean at the above address, by phone at (301) 427-8403 or [Ron.Dean@noaa.gov](mailto:Ron.Dean@noaa.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** This notice announces our active review of the Baiji/Chinese River Dolphin/Yangtze River Dolphin and the Saimaa seal. 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 species currently under active review. On the basis of such reviews under section 4(c)(2)(B), we determine whether a species should be delisted or reclassified from endangered to threatened or from threatened to endangered. As described by the regulations in 50 CFR 424.11(d), delisting a species must be supported by the best scientific and commercial data available and only considered if such data substantiates that the species is neither endangered nor threatened for one or more of the following reasons: (1) The species is considered extinct; (2) the species is considered to be

recovered; or (3) the original data available when the species was listed, or the interpretation of such data, were in error. Any change in Federal classification would require a separate rulemaking process. The Baiji/Chinese River Dolphin/Yangtze River Dolphin was listed as endangered under the ESA on May 30, 1989 (54 FR 22906) and the Saimaa seal was listed as endangered under the ESA on May 6, 1993 (58 FR 26920).

Background information on Baiji/Chinese River Dolphin/Yangtze River Dolphin, including the endangered listing, is available on the NMFS Office of Protected Species Web site at: <http://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/pr/species/mammals/dolphins/chinese-river-dolphin.html>. Background information on Saimaa seal, including the endangered listing, is available on the NMFS Office of Protected Species Web site at: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/species/mammals/seals/saimaa-seal.html>.

#### Determining if a Species Is Threatened or Endangered

Section 4(a)(1) of the ESA requires that we determine whether a species is endangered or threatened based on one or more of the five following factors: (1) The present or threatened destruction, modification, or curtailment of its habitat or range; (2) overutilization for commercial, recreational, scientific, or educational purposes; (3) disease or predation; (4) the inadequacy of existing regulatory mechanisms; or (5) other natural or manmade factors affecting its continued existence. Section 4(b) also requires that our determination be made on the basis of the best scientific and commercial data available after conducting a review of the status of the species and after taking into account those efforts, if any, being made by any State or foreign nation, to protect such species.

#### Public Solicitation of New Information

To ensure that the 5-year reviews are complete and based on the best available scientific and commercial data, 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 Baiji/Chinese River Dolphin/Yangtze River Dolphin, and the Saimaa seal. 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 important