

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

RIN 0648–XF801

Endangered Species; File No. 20610

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

ACTION: Notice; receipt of application for permit modification.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that David Portnoy, Ph.D., Texas A&M University, Corpus Christi, TX 78412, has requested a modification to scientific research Permit No. 20610–01.

DATES: Written, telefaxed, or email comments must be received on or before October 24, 2019.

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 (APPS) home page, <https://apps.nmfs.noaa.gov>, and then selecting File No. 20610–02 from the list of available applications. These documents are also available upon written request or by appointment in the 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.

Written comments on this application should be submitted to the Chief, Permits and Conservation 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. 20610 in the subject line of the email comment.

Those individuals requesting a public hearing should submit a written request to the Chief, Permits and Conservation Division at the address listed above. The request should set forth the specific reasons why a hearing on the application would be appropriate.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jennifer Skidmore or Erin Markin (301) 427–8401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The subject modification to Permit No. 20610–01 is requested 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).

Permit No. 20610, issued on February 27, 2018 (83 FR 13731; March 30, 2018),

authorizes the permit holder to import scalloped hammerhead shark (*Sphyrna lewini*) tissues for genetic analysis at Texas A&M University in Corpus Christi. The permit was modified on June 27, 2019 (84 FR 34371; July 18, 2019) adding Cabo Verde as an additional country from which samples may be imported. The permit holder is requesting authorization to import additional samples from up to 100 animals from the eastern

Pacific Distinct Population Segment (DPS) and up to 50 animals from the eastern Atlantic DPS. All other aspects of the permitted activities would not change. The permit would expire on February 28, 2023.

Dated: September 18, 2019.

Julia Marie Harrison,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

RIN 0648–XY008

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone off Alaska; Application for an Exempted Fishing Permit

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

ACTION: Notice; receipt of application for exempted fishing permit.

SUMMARY: This notice announces receipt of an exempted fishing permit (EFP) application from United Catcher Boats for pollock catcher vessels (CVs) using pelagic trawl gear in the eastern Bering Sea (BS) and Gulf of Alaska (GOA) to evaluate the efficacy of electronic monitoring (EM) systems in lieu of observers for at-sea monitoring of vessels for compliance with fishery management regulations. If granted, this EFP would allow approximately 49 pollock CVs and nine tender vessels to participate in the proposed EFP to evaluate whether the use of EM systems is a cost and operationally effective means for monitoring vessel compliance with catch and discard requirements. If issued, the EFP would be in effect during 2020 and 2021 for the pollock fishing seasons (both A and B seasons in the BS and A/B and C/D seasons in the GOA). Results from this proposed EFP are intended to inform future North Pacific Fishery Management Council

(Council) analyses in consideration of a regulatory program to implement EM systems aboard pollock CVs using pelagic trawl gear in the BS and GOA as a compliance monitoring tool in these fisheries. This proposed project has the potential to promote the objectives of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act).

DATES: Comments on this EFP application must be submitted to NMFS on or before October 9, 2019. The Council will consider the application at its meeting from September 30, 2019, through October 9, 2019, in Homer, AK.

ADDRESSES: The Council meeting will be held at the Land’s End Resort, 4786 Homer Spit Rd, Homer, AK 99603. The agenda for the Council meeting is available at <https://www.npfmc.org>. In addition to submitting comments at the Council meeting, you may submit comments on this document, identified by NOAA–NMFS–2019–0100, by any of the following methods:

- *Federal e-Rulemaking Portal:* Go to www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=NOAA–NMFS–2019–0100, click the “Comment Now!” icon, complete the required fields, and enter or attach your comments.

- *Mail:* Submit written comments to Glenn Merrill, Assistant Regional Administrator, Sustainable Fisheries Division, Alaska Region NMFS, Attn: Records Office. Mail comments to P.O. Box 21668, Juneau, AK 99802–1668.

Instructions: 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 without change. All personal identifying information (e.g., name, address) submitted voluntarily by the sender will be publicly accessible. NMFS will accept anonymous comments (enter “N/A” in the required fields if you wish to remain anonymous).

Electronic copies of the EFP application and the basis for a categorical exclusion under the National Environmental Policy Act prepared for this action are available from www.regulations.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Bridget Mansfield, 907–586–7228.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: NMFS manages the groundfish fisheries in the exclusive economic zone of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands (BSAI) and GOA under the Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for Groundfish of the BSAI Management Area (BSAI FMP) and the