

part 216), the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*), the regulations governing the taking, importing, and exporting of endangered and threatened species (50 CFR parts 222–226), and the Fur Seal Act of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1151 *et seq.*).

The applicant proposes to receive, import, and export marine mammal parts for scientific research to develop cell lines that will be used to study cetacean development for evolutionary neuroscience and toxicology studies. An unlimited number of samples or cell lines from up to 480 individual cetaceans may be received, imported, or exported annually. An additional 50 established cetacean cell lines may be acquired under this permit. The requested duration of the permit is 5 years.

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

Julia Marie Harrison,

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

[FR Doc. 2020–12403 Filed 6–8–20; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–22–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648–XA215]

Taking and Importing Marine Mammals; Taking Marine Mammals Incidental to U.S. Navy Construction at Naval Station Norfolk in Norfolk, Virginia

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

ACTION: Notice; receipt of application for letter of authorization; request for comments and information.

SUMMARY: NMFS has received a request from the U.S. Navy (Navy) for authorization to take small numbers of marine mammals incidental to construction activities including marine

structure maintenance, pile replacement, and select waterfront improvements at Naval Station Norfolk over the course of five years from the date of issuance. Pursuant to regulations implementing the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA), NMFS is announcing receipt of the Navy's request for the development and implementation of regulations governing the incidental taking of marine mammals. NMFS invites the public to provide information, suggestions, and comments on the Navy's application and request.

DATES: Comments and information must be received no later than July 9, 2020.

ADDRESSES: Comments on the application should be addressed to Jolie Harrison, Chief, Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service. Physical comments should be sent to 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910 and electronic comments should be sent to ITP.Davis@noaa.gov.

Instructions: NMFS is not responsible for comments sent by any other method, to any other address or individual, or received after the end of the comment period. All comments received are a part of the public record and will generally be posted online at <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/marine-mammal-protection/incidental-take-authorizations-construction-activities> without change. All personal identifying information (e.g., name, address) voluntarily submitted by the commenter may be publicly accessible. Do not submit confidential business information or otherwise sensitive or protected information.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Leah Davis, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, (301) 427–8401. An electronic copy of the Navy's application may be obtained online at: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/marine-mammal-protection/incidental-take-authorizations-construction-activities>. In case of problems accessing these documents, please call the contact listed above.

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 (as delegated to NMFS) 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.

An incidental take authorization 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 216.103 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.

The MMPA states that the term “take” means to harass, hunt, capture, kill or attempt to harass, hunt, capture, or kill any marine mammal.

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, breeding, nursing, breeding, feeding, or sheltering (Level B harassment).

Summary of Request

In February 2020, NMFS received an application from the Navy requesting authorization for take of marine mammals incidental to construction activities including marine structure maintenance, pile replacement, and select waterfront improvements at Naval Station Norfolk. NMFS reviewed the Navy's application, and the Navy provided an updated version addressing NMFS' questions and comments on May 22, 2020. The requested regulations would be valid for five years, from 2021 through 2025. The Navy plans to conduct necessary work, including impact and vibratory pile driving, to repair and upgrade waterfront structures. The proposed action may incidentally expose marine mammals occurring in the vicinity to elevated levels of underwater sound, potentially resulting in incidental take, by harassment only. Therefore, the Navy requests authorization to incidentally take marine mammals.

Specified Activities

The Navy is proposing to upgrade two waterfront facilities on Naval Station Norfolk: the Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) Marina and the V-Area. The Navy is also proposing to conduct general marine structure maintenance, pile replacement, and upgrade activities, as needed, at waterfront facilities at Naval Station Norfolk, Defense Fuel Supply Point Craney Island, and Lambert's Point Deperming Station. The Navy expects construction will require approximately 574 in-water workdays over the five-year period. Five species of marine mammals have been observed in the area and have the potential to be taken by the Navy's activities.

Information Solicited

Interested persons may submit information, suggestions, and comments concerning the Navy's request (see **ADDRESSES**). NMFS will consider all information, suggestions, and comments related to the request during the development of proposed regulations governing the incidental taking of marine mammals by the Navy, if appropriate.

Dated: June 4, 2020.

Donna Wieting,

*Director, Office of Protected Resources,
National Marine Fisheries Service.*

[FR Doc. 2020-12466 Filed 6-8-20; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648-XA160]

Taking and Importing Marine Mammals; Taking Marine Mammals Incidental to Lighthouse Repair and Tour Operations at Northwest Seal Rock, California

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

ACTION: Notice; receipt of application for Letter of Authorization; request for comments and information.

SUMMARY: NMFS has received a request from the St. George Reef Lighthouse Preservation Society (Society) for authorization to take small numbers of marine mammals incidental to Lighthouse Repair and Tour Operations at Northwest Seal Rock, California over the course of five years from the date of issuance. Pursuant to regulations

implementing the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA), NMFS is announcing receipt of the Society's request for the development and implementation of regulations governing the incidental taking of marine mammals. NMFS invites the public to provide information, suggestions, and comments on the Society's application and request.

DATES: Comments and information must be received no later than July 9, 2020.

ADDRESSES: Comments on the applications should be addressed to Jolie Harrison, Chief, Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service. Physical comments should be sent to 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910 and electronic comments should be sent to ITP.DeJoseph@noaa.gov.

Instructions: NMFS is not responsible for comments sent by any other method, to any other address or individual, or received after the end of the comment period. Comments received electronically, including all attachments, must not exceed a 25-megabyte file size. Attachments to electronic comments will be accepted in Microsoft Word or Excel or Adobe PDF file formats only. All comments received are a part of the public record and will generally be posted online at <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/marine-mammal-protection/incidental-take-authorizations-research-and-other-activities> without change. All personal identifying information (*e.g.*, name, address) voluntarily submitted by the commenter may be publicly accessible. Do not submit confidential business information or otherwise sensitive or protected information.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Bonnie DeJoseph, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, (301) 427-8401. An electronic copy of the Society's application may be obtained online at: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/marine-mammal-protection/incidental-take-authorizations-research-and-other-activities>. In case of problems accessing these documents, please call the contact listed above.

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 (as delegated to NMFS) 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.

An incidental take authorization 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 216.103 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.

The MMPA states that the term "take" means to harass, hunt, capture, kill or attempt to harass, hunt, capture, or kill any marine mammal.

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 March 23, 2020, NMFS received a request from the Society for authorization of take of marine mammals incidental to construction activities related to the lighthouse maintenance and preservation project at Northwest Seal Rock (NWSR), Del Norte County, California. We determined the application was adequate and complete on April 16, 2020. The requested regulations would be valid for five years, from November 1, 2020 through October 31, 2025. The Society plans to conduct necessary work, including visiting the islet by helicopter to conduct lighthouse renovations and periodic maintenance on the Station's optical light system, as well as public tours of the historic lighthouse, to preserve the lighthouse. The proposed action may incidentally expose marine mammals occurring in the vicinity to acoustic and visual stimuli from the following sources: (1) Helicopter landings/takeoffs; (2) noise generated during restoration activities (*e.g.*,