

funds, or carries out is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of any endangered or threatened species or result in the destruction or adverse modification of designated critical habitat. To ensure ESA compliance for the issuance of IHAs, NMFS consults internally whenever NMFS proposes to authorize take for endangered or threatened species, in this case with NMFS Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office (GARFO).

The NMFS OPR is authorizing the incidental take of four species of marine mammals which are listed under the ESA: North Atlantic right, fin, sei, and sperm whales. The OPR requested initiation of Section 7 consultation with NMFS GARFO on April 19, 2021, for the issuance of the IHA. On June 1, 2021, NMFS GARFO determined that issuance of the IHA to Garden State is not likely to adversely affect the North Atlantic, fin, sei, or sperm whale or result in take of any marine mammals that would violate the ESA.

National Environmental Policy Act

To comply with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA; 42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*) and NOAA Administrative Order (NAO) 216-6A, NMFS must review our proposed action (*i.e.*, the issuance of an IHA) with respect to potential impacts on the human environment.

This action is consistent with categories of activities identified in Categorical Exclusion B4 (IHAs with no anticipated serious injury or mortality) of the Companion Manual for NOAA Administrative Order 216-6A, which do not individually or cumulatively have the potential for significant impacts on the quality of the human environment and for which NMFS have not identified any extraordinary circumstances that would preclude this categorical exclusion. Accordingly, NMFS has determined that the issuance of the IHA qualifies to be categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

Authorization

NMFS has issued an IHA to Garden State for the potential harassment of small numbers of 16 marine mammal species (with 17 managed stocks) incidental to conducting marine site characterization surveys offshore of Delaware and New Jersey in the area of the Commercial Lease of Submerged Lands for Renewable Energy Development on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS-A 0482) and along potential export cable routes to landfall locations in Delaware and New Jersey, provided the previously mentioned mitigation,

monitoring, and reporting requirements are followed.

Dated: June 14, 2021.

Catherine Marzin,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648-XB168]

Taking and Importing Marine Mammals; Taking Marine Mammals Incidental to U.S. Navy Marine Structure Maintenance and Pile Replacement in Washington

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

ACTION: Notice of issuance of letters of authorization.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA), as amended, and implementing regulations, notification is hereby given that two Letters of Authorization (LOA) have been issued to the U.S. Navy (Navy) for the take of marine mammals incidental to maintenance construction activities at facilities in Washington.

DATES: The LOAs are effective from July 16, 2021, through January 15, 2022, and from July 16, 2021, through February 15, 2022.

ADDRESSES: The LOAs and supporting documentation are available online at: www.fisheries.noaa.gov/action/incidental-take-authorization-us-navy-marine-structure-maintenance-and-pile-replacement-wa. In case of problems accessing these documents, please call the contact listed below (see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**).

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.

An 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 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.

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 April 17, 2019, we issued a final rule upon request from the Navy for authorization to take marine mammals incidental to maintenance construction activities at six facilities in Washington (84 FR 15963). The Navy plans to conduct construction necessary for maintenance of existing in-water structures at the following facilities: Naval Base Kitsap (NBK) Bangor, NBK Bremerton, NBK Keyport, NBK Manchester, Zelatched Point, and Naval Station Everett (NS Everett). These repairs include use of impact and vibratory pile driving, including installation and removal of steel, concrete, plastic, and timber piles. The use of both vibratory and impact pile driving is expected to produce underwater sound at levels that have the potential to result in harassment of marine mammals.

For the 2021-22 in-water work season, the Navy requested issuance of LOAs for work planned at NBK Manchester and NBK Bangor. The Navy submitted site-specific monitoring plans. Following NMFS review and approval of the required plans, we have issued the requested LOAs. The approved plans are available online at:

www.fisheries.noaa.gov/action/incidental-take-authorization-us-navy-marine-structure-maintenance-and-pile-replacement-wa.

For the 2020–21 in-water work season, the Navy requested issuance of LOAs for work planned at NBK Manchester and Zelatched Point. The work planned for NBK Manchester was delayed and will now occur during the 2021–22 work season. The Navy submitted a monitoring report for work conducted at Zelatched Point, which is available online at:

www.fisheries.noaa.gov/action/incidental-take-authorization-us-navy-marine-structure-maintenance-and-pile-replacement-wa.

Authorization

We have issued two LOAs to the Navy authorizing the take of marine mammals incidental to maintenance construction activities, as described above. Take of marine mammals will be minimized through the implementation of the following planned mitigation measures: (1) Required monitoring of the construction areas to detect the presence of marine mammals before beginning construction activities; (2) shutdown of construction activities under certain circumstances to avoid injury of marine mammals; and (3) soft start for impact pile driving to allow marine mammals the opportunity to leave the area prior to beginning impact pile driving at full power. Additionally, the rule includes an adaptive management component that allows for timely modification of mitigation or monitoring measures based on new information, when appropriate. The Navy will submit reports as required.

Based on these findings and the information discussed in the preamble to the final rule, the activities described under these LOAs will have a negligible impact on marine mammal stocks and will not have an unmitigable adverse impact on the availability of the affected marine mammal stock for subsistence uses.

Dated: June 22, 2021.

Catherine Marzin,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Agency Information Collection Activities; Submission to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for Review and Approval; Comment Request; NOAA Customer Surveys

The Department of Commerce will submit the following information collection request to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and clearance in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, on or after the date of publication of this notice. We invite the general public and other Federal agencies to comment on proposed, and continuing information collections, which helps us assess the impact of our information collection requirements and minimize the public's reporting burden. Public comments were previously requested via the **Federal Register** on March 2, 2021 (86 FR 12179), during a 60-day comment period. This notice allows for an additional 30 days for public comments.

Agency: National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration, Commerce.

Title: NOAA Customer Surveys.
OMB Control Number: 0648–0342.
Form Number(s): None.

Type of Request: Regular submission [Revision and extension of a current information collection.].

Number of Respondents: 65,860 (197,580 for 3-year period).

Average Hours per Response: Response time varies from 5 minutes for most web surveys to two hours for focus groups or interviews.

Total Annual Burden Hours: 9,298 (27,894 for 3-year period).

Needs and Uses: This request is for a revision and extension of a currently approved generic information collection.

This collection follows the guidelines contained in the OMB Resource Manual for Customer Surveys. In accordance with Executive Order 12862, the National Performance Review, and good management practices, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) offices seek approval to continue to gather customer feedback on services and/or products which can be used in planning for service/product modification and prioritization. Under this generic clearance, individual offices would use approved questionnaires and develop new questionnaires, as needed, by selecting subsets of the approved set of

collection questions and tailoring those specific questions to be meaningful for their particular programs. Surveys currently typically include IT and website satisfaction surveys, Weather Service product surveys, and National Marine Sanctuary participation surveys, among others.

This generic clearance will not be used to survey any bodies NOAA regulates unless precautions are taken to ensure that the respondents believe that they are not under any risk for not responding or for the contents of their responses, *e.g.*, in no survey to such a population will the names and addresses of respondents be required.

Two sets of survey questions are used for generation of program-level questionnaires. Quantitative questions seek to obtain numerical ratings from respondents on their satisfaction with various aspects of the product or service they obtained—satisfaction with the quality of the product, the courtesy of the staff, the format of and documentation for data received, and similar standard types of questions. The offices using such questions are able to determine which aspects of their program need improvement or have improved. Qualitative questions are more focused on who is using the product and service, how it is being used, and the medium or format in which the respondent would like to see data provided.

NOAA seeks to add new questions to the approved question bank in order to more accurately reflect information required by NOAA in order to carry out its mission. Additionally, the number of anticipated respondents, responses, and burden hours have been updated to more accurately reflect the burden imposed by this collection.

Affected Public: Individuals or households; Business or other for-profit organizations; Not-for-profit institutions; State, Local, or Tribal government; Federal government; Farms.

Frequency: On occasion.

Respondent's Obligation: Voluntary.

Legal Authority: Executive Order 12862, Circular A–11.

This information collection request may be viewed at www.reginfo.gov. Follow the instructions to view the Department of Commerce collections currently under review by OMB.

Written comments and recommendations for the proposed information collection should be submitted within 30 days of the publication of this notice on the following website www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain. Find this particular information collection by