

Permit No. 23188, issued on September 25, 2020 (85 FR 63524), authorizes the permit holder to conduct scientific research on northern elephant seals (NES; *Mirounga angustirostris*) in California. The permit activities continue a long-term research program started in 1968 to study NES population growth and status, reproduction, behavioral and physiological adaptations for diving and fasting, general physiology and metabolism, and sensory physiology. Authorized activities include behavioral observations, marking, capture, biological sampling (including skin, blubber, and muscle biopsies), active and passive acoustics, instrumentation, translocation studies, short-term captive holding for laboratory studies, use of hormone challenges and standard clinical tracer techniques, and unmanned aircraft system surveys. The permit authorizes unintentional mortalities of up to 5 NES annually during research, and euthanasia of up to 10 moribund or abandoned NES pups annually. Three amendments to the permit were issued to: increase take numbers and add a new study area (No. 23188-01; April 27, 2021); add new study areas and update methods for acoustic studies (No. 23188-02; November 19, 2021); and update methods for biological sampling and instrumentation (No. 23188-03; February 2, 2022). The permit holder is requesting the permit be amended to include authorization for additional reproductive studies to investigate embryonic diapause in NES. Over a 2-year study period, 39 adult females would be captured, anesthetized, marked, sampled, and instrumented, as currently authorized. Researchers would use a transrectal ultrasound to check for pregnancy and non-pregnant females would then have uterine endoscopy, cytology, lavage, and biopsy sampling. The lavage and biopsy procedures may result in egg, sperm, or blastocyst removal from the uterus. A subset of these females may be captured and sampled twice per year. An additional 390 NES may be unintentionally harassed during these reproductive studies. The amendment would be valid for the duration of the permit, until September 30, 2025.

A draft environmental assessment (EA) has been prepared in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), to examine whether significant environmental impacts could result from issuance of the proposed scientific research permit amendment. The draft EA is available for review and comment

simultaneous with the scientific research permit amendment application.

Concurrent with the publication of this notice in the **Federal Register**, NMFS is forwarding copies of this application to the Marine Mammal Commission and its Committee of Scientific Advisors.

Dated: November 14, 2023.

Julia M. 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

[RTID 0648-XD543]

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC); Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice; public meeting.

SUMMARY: The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council's Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Monitoring Committee will hold a public webinar meeting.

DATES: The meeting will be held on Thursday, December 7, 2023 from 1:30 p.m. until 3:30 p.m. EDT. For agenda details, see **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held via webinar. Connection information will be posted to the calendar prior to the meeting at www.mafmc.org.

Council address: Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, 800 N State Street, Suite 201, Dover, DE 19901; telephone: (302) 674-2331; www.mafmc.org.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Christopher M. Moore, Ph.D., Executive Director, Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, telephone: (302) 526-5255.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Monitoring Committee will meet via webinar to continue discussions from their November 13-14, 2023 meeting related to 2024-2025 recreational management measures for summer flounder and scup and 2024 recreational management measures for black sea bass. Specifically, the Monitoring Committee will continue

discussions to recommend the appropriate non-preferred coastwide and precautionary default measures (e.g., possession limits, fish size limits, seasons) associated with conservation equivalency for summer flounder and black sea bass, and revisit additional information in support of their recommendation for scup federal waters measures in 2024.

Meeting materials will be posted to www.mafmc.org.

Special Accommodations

The meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aid should be directed to Shelley Spedden, (302) 526-5251, at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

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

Dated: November 14, 2023.

Rey Israel Marquez,

Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Patent and Trademark Office

Agency Information Collection Activities; Submission to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for Review and Approval; Comment Request; Patent and Trademark Resource Center Metrics

AGENCY: United States Patent and Trademark Office, Department of Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of information collection; request for comment.

SUMMARY: The United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO), as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, invites comments on the extension and revision of an existing information collection: 0651-0068 (Patent and Trademark Resource Center Metrics). The purpose of this notice is to allow 60 days for public comment preceding submission of the information collection to OMB.

DATES: To ensure consideration, comments regarding this information collection must be received on or before January 19, 2024.

ADDRESSES: Interested persons are invited to submit written comments by any of the following methods. Do not submit Confidential Business Information or otherwise sensitive or protected information.

• *Email:* InformationCollection@uspto.gov. Include "0651-0068