

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

[RTID 0648–XD822]

Marine Mammals and Endangered Species; File No. 27830

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

ACTION: Notice; receipt of application.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that Gregory Lewbart, VMD, North Carolina State University, College of Veterinary Medicine, 1060 William Moore Drive, Raleigh, NC 27607, has applied in due form for a permit to import and export marine mammal and protected species parts for scientific research.

DATES: Written, telefaxed, or email comments must be received on or before May 2, 2024.

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. 27830 from the list of available applications. These documents are also available upon written request via email to NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov.

Written comments on this application should be submitted via email to NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov. Please include File No. 27830 in the subject line of the email comment.

Those individuals requesting a public hearing should submit a written request via email to NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov. The request should set forth the specific reasons why a hearing on this application would be appropriate.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Malcolm Mohead or Jennifer Skidmore, (301) 427–8401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The subject permit is requested under the authority of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended (MMPA; 16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*), the regulations governing the taking and importing of marine mammals (50 CFR 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 import parts of Galápagos sea lions (*Zalophus*

wollebaeki) and Galápagos fur seals (*Arctocephalus galapagoensis*) collected in Ecuador to the North Carolina State University, College of Veterinarian Medicine or ZooQuatic Labs, Baltimore, Maryland. Samples will be obtained from live animals during health assessments or from dead salvaged animals, including those impacted by boats or fishing equipment. In addition, samples may be exported for additional analyses. The objective of the research is to assess each population’s health by analyzing samples collected from up to 50 live and 100 dead animals of each species, annually. The permit would be valid for 5 years from the date of issuance.

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.

Dated: March 27, 2024.

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

[FR Doc. 2024–06862 Filed 4–1–24; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–22–P

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; West Coast Region, Gear Identification Requirements**

AGENCY: National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of information collection, request for comment.

SUMMARY: The Department of Commerce, in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA), invites 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. The purpose of this notice is to allow for 60 days of public

comment preceding submission of the collection to OMB.

DATES: To ensure consideration, comments regarding this proposed information collection must be received on or before June 3, 2024.

ADDRESSES: Interested persons are invited to submit written comments to Adrienne Thomas, NOAA PRA Officer, at NOAA.PRA@noaa.gov. Please reference OMB Control Number 0648–0352 in the subject line of your comments. Do not submit Confidential Business Information or otherwise sensitive or protected information.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information or specific questions related to collection activities should be directed to Christopher Biegel, Fishery Management Specialist, National Marine Fisheries Service, West Coast Regional Office, 1201 NE Lloyd Blvd., Suite 1100, Portland, OR 97232, (503) 231–6291, christopher.biegel@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**I. Abstract**

This request is for an extension of a currently approved information collection. The success of fisheries management programs depends significantly on regulatory compliance. The requirements that fishing gear be marked are essential to facilitate enforcement. The ability to link fishing gear to the vessel owner or operator is crucial to enforcement of regulations issued under the authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. The marking of fishing gear is also valuable in actions concerning damage, loss, and civil proceedings. The regulations specify that fishing gear must be marked with the vessel’s official number, Federal permit or tag number, or some other specified form of identification. The regulations further specify how the gear is to be marked (*e.g.*, location and color).

Law enforcement personnel rely on gear marking information to assure compliance with fisheries management regulations. Gear that is not properly identified is confiscated. Gear violations are more readily prosecuted when the gear is marked, and this allows for more cost-effective enforcement. Gear marking helps ensure that a vessel harvests fish only from its own traps/pots/other gear and that fishing gear are not illegally placed. Cooperating fishermen also use the gear marking numbers to report suspicious or non-compliant activities that they observe, and to report placement or occurrence of gear in unauthorized areas. The

identifying number on fishing gear is used by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), the United States Coast Guard (USCG), and other marine agencies in issuing regulations, prosecutions, and other enforcement actions necessary to support sustainable fisheries behaviors as intended in regulations. Regulation-compliant fishermen ultimately benefit from these requirements, as unauthorized and illegal fishing is deterred and more burdensome regulations are avoided.

II. Method of Collection

The physical marking of fishing buoys is done by fishermen in the Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery according to regulation.

III. Data

OMB Control Number: 0648–0352.

Form Number(s): None.

Type of Review: Regular submission (extension of a current information collection).

Affected Public: Business or other for-profit organizations.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 1,125.

Estimated Time per Response: 15 minutes.

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 574 hours.

Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public: \$11,351.60 for materials.

Respondent's Obligation: Mandatory.

Legal Authority: NMFS and the Pacific Fisheries Management Council (Council) manage the groundfish fisheries in the exclusive economic zone seaward of California, Oregon, and Washington under the Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery Management Plan (FMP). The Council prepared the FMP under the authority of the MSA, 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.* Regulations governing United States fisheries and implementing the FMP appear at 50 CFR parts 660.

IV. Request for Comments

We are soliciting public comments to permit the Department/Bureau to: (a) Evaluate whether the proposed information collection is necessary for the proper functions of the Department, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) Evaluate the accuracy of our estimate of the time and cost burden for this proposed collection, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (c) Evaluate ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) Minimize the reporting burden on those who are to respond, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Comments that you submit in response to this notice are a matter of public record. We will include or summarize each comment in our request to OMB to approve this ICR. Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you may ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Sheleen Dumas,

Department PRA Clearance Officer, Office of the Under Secretary for Economic Affairs, Commerce Department.

[FR Doc. 2024–06903 Filed 4–1–24; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–22–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648–XD838]

Takes of Marine Mammals Incidental to Specified Activities; Taking Marine Mammals Incidental to the Skagway Ore Terminal Redevelopment Project in Skagway, Alaska

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

ACTION: Notice; proposed modification of an incidental harassment authorization; request for comments.

SUMMARY: On February 5, 2024, NMFS received a request from the Municipality of Skagway (MOS) to modify an incidental harassment authorization (IHA) that was issued to MOS on August 29, 2023 to take small numbers of eight species of marine mammals, by Level A and Level B harassment, incidental to the Skagway Ore Terminal redevelopment project. Pursuant to the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA), NMFS is requesting comments on its proposal to modify the IHA. This modification includes changes to the amount of authorized take by Level B harassment for Steller sea lions and the addition of take by Level A and Level B harassment for the northern fur seal (*Callorhinus ursinus*). There are no changes to the activity, mitigation and monitoring, NMFS' findings, the effective dates of the issued IHA, or any other aspect of the IHA. NMFS will consider public

comments prior to making any final decision on the requested modification of the authorization and agency responses will be summarized in the final notice of our decision.

DATES: Comments and information must be received no later than April 17, 2024.

ADDRESSES: Comments should be addressed to Jolie Harrison, Chief, Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service. Written comments should be submitted via email to ITP.harlacher@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, including all attachments, must not exceed a 25-megabyte file size. Attachments to 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/permit/incidental-take-authorizations-under-marine-mammal-protection-act> 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: Jenna Harlacher, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, (301) 427–8401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The MMPA prohibits the “take” of marine mammals, with certain exceptions. 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 incidental take authorization may be provided to the public for review.

Authorization for incidental takings shall be granted if NMFS finds that the taking will have a negligible impact on the species or stock(s) and will not have an unmitigable adverse impact on the availability of the species or stock(s) for taking for subsistence uses (where relevant). Further, NMFS must prescribe the permissible methods of taking and