

the distance from the sound source to the sea otter upon initial observation, the duration of the encounter, and the distance at last observation in order to monitor cumulative sound exposures.

(vi) Observers will note any instances of animals lingering close to or traveling with vessels for prolonged periods of time.

(21) Monitoring of the shutdown zone must continue for 30 minutes following completion of pile installation.

#### *E. Measures To Reduce Impacts to Subsistence Users*

(22) Prior to conducting the work, the City and Borough of Sitka will take the following steps to reduce potential effects on subsistence harvest of sea otters:

- (i) Avoid work in areas of known sea otter subsistence harvest;
- (ii) Discuss the planned activities with subsistence stakeholders including Southeast Alaska villages and traditional councils;
- (iii) Identify and work to resolve concerns of stakeholders regarding the project's effects on subsistence hunting of sea otters; and
- (iv) If any concerns remain, develop a POC in consultation with the FWS and subsistence stakeholders to address these concerns.

#### *F. Reporting Requirements*

(23) The City and Borough of Sitka must notify the FWS at least 48 hours prior to commencement of activities.

(24) Reports will be submitted to the FWS's MMM weekly during project activities. The reports will summarize project work and monitoring efforts.

(25) A final report will be submitted to the FWS's MMM within 90 days after completion of work or expiration of the IHA. It will summarize all monitoring efforts and observations, describe all project activities, and discuss any additional work yet to be done. Factors influencing visibility and detectability of marine mammals (*e.g.*, sea state, number of observers, fog, and glare) will be discussed. The report will describe changes in sea otter behavior resulting from project activities and any specific behaviors of interest. Sea otter observation records will be provided in the form of electronic database or spreadsheet files. The report will assess any effects the City and Borough of Sitka's operations may have had on the availability of sea otters for subsistence harvest and if applicable, evaluate the effectiveness of the POC for preventing impacts to subsistence users of sea otters.

(26) Injured, dead, or distressed sea otters that are not associated with

project activities (*e.g.*, animals found outside the project area, previously wounded animals, or carcasses with moderate to advanced decomposition or scavenger damage) must be reported to the FWS within 24 hours of discovery. Photographs, video, location information, or any other available documentation shall be provided to the FWS.

(27) All reports shall be submitted by email to [fw7\\_mmm\\_reports@fws.gov](mailto:fw7_mmm_reports@fws.gov).

(28) The City and Borough of Sitka must notify the FWS upon project completion or end of the work season.

#### **Request for Public Comments**

If you wish to comment on this proposed authorization, the associated draft environmental assessment, or both documents, you may submit your comments by either of the methods described in **ADDRESSES**. Please identify if you are commenting on the proposed authorization, draft environmental assessment, or both, make your comments as specific as possible, confine them to issues pertinent to the proposed authorization, and explain the reason for any changes you recommend. Where possible, your comments should reference the specific section or paragraph that you are addressing. The FWS will consider all comments that are received before the close of the comment period (see **DATES**). The FWS does not anticipate extending the public comment period beyond the 30 days required under section 101(a)(5)(D)(iii) of the MMPA.

Comments, including names and street addresses of respondents, will become part of the administrative record for this proposal. Before including your address, telephone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, be advised that your entire comment, including your personal identifying information, may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comments to withhold from public review your personal identifying information, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

#### **Peter Fasbender,**

*Assistant Regional Director for Fisheries and Ecological Services, Alaska Region.*

[FR Doc. 2024-09895 Filed 5-6-24; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4333-15-P**

## **DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

### **Fish and Wildlife Service**

[Docket No. FWS-R7-ES-2024-0003; FXES111607MRG01-245-FF07CAMM00]

### **Marine Mammals; Letters of Authorization To Take Pacific Walruses, Polar Bears, and Northern Sea Otters in Alaska, in 2023**

**AGENCY:** Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice of issuance.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) issues letters of authorization (LOA) for the nonlethal take of polar bears and Pacific walruses incidental to oil and gas industry exploration, development, and production activities in the Beaufort Sea and the adjacent northern coast of Alaska. The Service also issues LOAs for the nonlethal take of northern sea otters incidental to pile driving and marine construction activities in the Gulf of Alaska. This notice announces the LOAs issued in calendar year 2023. The LOAs stipulate conditions and methods that minimize impacts to polar bears, Pacific walruses, and northern sea otters from these activities.

#### **ADDRESSES:**

*Accessing documents:* You may view the letters of authorization at <https://www.regulations.gov> under Docket No. FWS-R7-ES-2024-0003. Alternatively, you may request these documents from the person listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**.

#### **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Charles Hamilton, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1011 East Tudor Road MS-341, Anchorage, AK 99503, by email at [R7mmmregulatory@fws.gov](mailto:R7mmmregulatory@fws.gov) or by telephone at (907) 786-3800. Individuals in the United States who are deaf, deafblind, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability may dial 711 (TTY, TDD, or TeleBraille) to access telecommunications relay services. Individuals outside the United States should use the relay services offered within their country to make international calls to the point-of-contact in the United States.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** On August 5, 2021, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) published in the **Federal Register** a final rule (86 FR 42982) establishing regulations that allow us to authorize the nonlethal, incidental, unintentional take of small numbers of polar bears (*Ursus maritimus*) and Pacific walruses

(*Odobenus rosmarus divergens*) during year-round oil and gas industry exploration, development, and production activities in the Beaufort Sea and adjacent northern coast of Alaska. These incidental take regulations are located in subpart J in part 18 of title 50 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) and are effective through August 5, 2026. The rule prescribed a process under which we issue letters of authorization (LOA) to applicants

conducting activities as described under the provisions of the regulations. Each LOA stipulates conditions or methods that are specific to the activity and location. Holders of the LOAs must use methods and conduct activities in a manner that minimizes to the greatest extent practicable adverse impacts on Pacific walruses and polar bears and their habitat, and on the availability of these marine mammals for subsistence purposes. No intentional take or lethal

incidental take is authorized under these regulations.

In accordance with section 101(a)(5)(A) of the Marine Mammal Protection Act (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*) and our regulations at 50 CFR part 18, subpart J, in 2023, we issued LOAs to the companies in the Beaufort Sea and adjacent northern coast of Alaska shown in table 1.

TABLE 1—LETTERS OF AUTHORIZATION ISSUED FOR OIL AND GAS DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES IN THE BEAUFORT SEA, ALASKA, IN 2023

Company	Project	LOA #
Eni U.S. Operating Company Inc .....	Oil and gas drilling and production within the Nikaitchuq and Oooguruk Units on Alaska's North Slope.	23-01.
ASRC Consulting and Environmental Services.	Well drilling and production test facility construction and operation for a methane hydrate project on the Kuparuk State 7-11-12 gravel pad within the Prudhoe Bay Unit on the North Slope of Alaska.	23-02.
Alyeska Pipeline Service Company .....	Operation and maintenance of the Trans Alaska Pipeline System, which extends from Pump Station 1 in the Prudhoe Bay Oilfield to the Valdez Marine Terminal.	23-03.
Oil Search Alaska, LLC .....	Oil and gas exploration and development within and adjacent to the Pikka Unit area and oil and gas exploration on Oil Search Alaska operated leaseholds on Alaska's North Slope.	23-04.
Hilcorp Alaska, LLC .....	Year-round oil and gas exploration, production, development, and support activities in the Milne Point, Duck Island (Endicott), Northstar Island, Prudhoe Bay, and Point Thomson operation areas located in the Beaufort Sea incidental take regulations area of the North Slope of Alaska.	23-05.
Hilcorp Alaska, LLC .....	An amendment request dated November 2, 2023, for 23-INC-05 to include three additional pad expansions, two additional road expansions, repair of the Northstar bench, and construction and use of an ice road from Niakuk to Endicott's main drilling island in the Mine Point, Duck Island (Endicott), and Northstar Island operational areas. Original LOA (23-INC-05) for year-round oil and gas exploration, production, development, and support activities in the Milne Point, Duck Island (Endicott), Northstar Island, Prudhoe Bay, and Point Thomson operation areas located in the Beaufort Sea incidental take regulations area of the North Slope of Alaska.	23-05 [Amended in Dec. 2023 from July 2023].
Hilcorp Alaska, LLC .....	A letter from the Service dated December 19, 2023, outlining additional monitoring and mitigation measures to reduce disturbance of a putative den identified through aerial infrared surveys and located within the 1-mile buffer zone of operations and infrastructure.	23-05 [Amended in Dec. 2023 from July 2023].
Conoco Phillips Alaska Inc .....	Incidental take of polar bears during oil and gas activities associated with the Willow Development (Project) work in 2023-2024. Represents an extension of Willow LOA 22-INC-10, which expires August 6, 2023.	23-06.
Conoco Phillips Alaska Inc .....	Renewal request of 22-INC-09: Incidental take of polar bears and Pacific walrus that may occur during ConocoPhillips Alaska Inc.'s field-wide operations in the Kuparuk River, Western North Slope, Colville River, Greater Moose's Tooth, and Bear Tooth Units on the North Slope of Alaska.	23-07.
Glacier Oil and Gas .....	Incidental harassment of polar bears and Pacific walrus that may occur during Glacier Oil and Gas Corporation's oil production, facilities and pipeline maintenance, workovers of existing wells, and construction and maintenance of ice roads associated with the Badami oilfield near Mikkelsen Bay in the North Slope.	23-08.
Conoco Phillips Alaska Inc .....	Incidental take of polar bears that may occur during CPAI's Ptarmigan Seismic Survey in the Greater Mooses Tooth, Bear Tooth, and non-unitized land on the North Slope of Alaska.	23-09.
ASRC Consulting and Environmental Services.	Incidental take of polar bears associated with Lagniappe drilling program activities, including ice road and ice pad construction, ice road transportation, well drilling, and aircraft-supported cleanup for an oil and gas exploration well drilling project. Drilling located south of the Badami Unit.	23-10.
Oil Search Alaska, LLC .....	Amendment submitted on Jan. 18, 2023, to LOA 22-INC-04. Amendment pertains to the incidental take of polar bears that may occur during activities associated with oil and gas exploration and development within and adjacent to the Pikka Unit area and oil and gas exploration on OSA-operated leaseholds on Alaska's North Slope. Amendment allows for additional tundra travel to survey a pipeline route between Oliktok Point and the Kuparuk area and the construction of a 10-acre gravel pad alongside the NDA gravel road.	22-04 [Amended in 2023 from 2022].

On April 19, 2023, the Service published in the **Federal Register** a final rule (88 FR 24115) establishing regulations that allow us to authorize the nonlethal, incidental, unintentional take of small numbers of northern sea otters (*Enhydra lutris kenyoni*) during marine construction and pile-driving activities in coastal waters surrounding eight United States Coast Guard (USCG) facilities in the Gulf of Alaska. These incidental take regulations are located in subpart L in part 18 of title 50 of the

Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) and are effective through May 19, 2028. The rule prescribed a process under which we issue LOAs to the USCG Guard conducting activities as described under the provisions of the regulations.

Each LOA stipulates conditions or methods that are specific to the activity and location. Holders of the LOAs must use methods and conduct activities in a manner that minimizes to the greatest extent practicable adverse impacts on northern sea otters and their habitat,

and on the availability of northern sea otters for subsistence purposes. No intentional take or lethal incidental take is authorized under these regulations.

In accordance with section 101(a)(5)(A) of the Marine Mammal Protection Act (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*) and our regulations at 50 CFR part 18, subpart L, in 2023, we issued two LOAs to the USCG for their activities in the Gulf of Alaska shown in table 2.

TABLE 2—LETTERS OF AUTHORIZATION ISSUED TO THE U.S. COAST GUARD (USCG) FOR MARINE CONSTRUCTION AND PILE-DRIVING ACTIVITIES IN THE GULF OF ALASKA

Company	Project	LOA #
USCG .....	Incidental take of small numbers of northern sea otters that may occur during activities associated with pile driving and marine construction activities in Cordova, Alaska.	23–CG–01
USCG .....	Incidental take of small numbers of northern sea otters that may occur during activities associated with improvements to the small boat fueling tank facility at USCG Station Valdez, Alaska.	23–CG–02

*Authority:* We issue this notice under the authority of the Marine Mammal Protection Act (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*).

**Peter Fasbender,**

*Assistant Regional Director, Fisheries and Ecological Services, Alaska Region.*

[FR Doc. 2024–09900 Filed 5–6–24; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4333–15–P**

**DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

**Bureau of Land Management**

[BLM\_OR\_FRN\_MO4500178813]

**Second Call for Nominations for the San Juan Islands National Monument Advisory Committee**

**AGENCY:** Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

**ACTION:** Second call for nominations to San Juan Islands National Monument Advisory Committee.

**SUMMARY:** The purpose of this notice is to request public nominations for the Bureau of Land Management’s (BLM) San Juan Islands National Monument Advisory Committee (MAC). The Council provides advice and recommendations to the BLM on land use planning and management of the public land resources located within the BLM’s San Juan Islands National Monument, located in the Spokane District.

**DATES:** All nominations must be received no later than June 21, 2024.

**ADDRESSES:** Nominations and completed applications should be sent to the BLM office listed in the **FOR FURTHER**

**INFORMATION CONTACT** section of this notice.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Travis Edwards BLM Spokane District Office, 1103 N Fancher, Spokane Valley, WA 99212; telephone: (509) 536–1297; or email: [tedwards@blm.gov](mailto:tedwards@blm.gov).

Individuals in the United States who are deaf, deafblind, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability may dial 711 (TTY, TDD, or TeleBraille) to access telecommunications relay services. Individuals outside the United States should use the relay services offered within their country to make international calls to the point-of-contact in the United States.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) directs the Secretary of the Interior to involve the public in planning and issues related to management of lands administered by the BLM. Section 309 of FLPMA, as amended (43 U.S.C. 1739), directs the Secretary to establish 10- to 15-member citizen-based advisory committees that are consistent with the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA). As required by FACA, MAC membership must be balanced and representative of the various interests concerned with the management of the public lands. The BLM’s regulations governing resource advisory councils are found at 43 CFR 1784.

The MAC includes thirteen representative members to be appointed by the Secretary of the Interior as follows:

- (a) One member representing archeological, cultural, and heritage interests;
- (b) One member representing wildlife and ecological interests;
- (c) One member representing the interests of a nonprofit organization whose mission is conservation and/or management of natural resources, land, or water;
- (d) One member representing natural resource management or natural sciences interests;
- (e) One member representing recreation and tourism interests;
- (f) One member representing local youth, education, and interpretation interests;
- (g) Two members that have significant cultural or historic connections to, and knowledge about, the landscape, archeological sites, or cultural sites connected to the Monument;
- (h) One member who holds State, county, or local elected office;
- (i) One member representing conservation and/or management of natural resources, land, or water interests;
- (j) One member representing local interests that is a resident of Lopez Island; and
- (k) One member of the public-at-large.

Members will be appointed to the MAC to serve three-year staggered terms.

*Nominating Potential Members:* Nominations should include a resume providing an adequate description of the nominee’s qualifications, including information that would enable the Department of the Interior to make an