

the estimated number of individual animals taken is up to, but not greater than, one-third of the best available abundance estimate, NMFS will determine that the numbers of marine mammals taken of a species or stock are small. For more information please see NMFS' discussion of the MMPA's small numbers requirement provided in the final rule (86 FR 5438, January 19, 2021).

The take numbers for authorization are determined as described above in the Summary of Request and Analysis section. Subsequently, the total incidents of harassment for each species are multiplied by scalar ratios to produce a derived product that better reflects the number of individuals likely to be taken within a survey (as

compared to the total number of instances of take), accounting for the likelihood that some individual marine mammals may be taken on more than one day (see 86 FR 5404, January 19, 2021). The output of this scaling, where appropriate, is incorporated into adjusted total take estimates that are the basis for NMFS' small numbers determinations, as depicted in table 1.

This product is used by NMFS in making the necessary small numbers determinations through comparison with the best available abundance estimates (see discussion at 86 FR 5391, January 19, 2021). For this comparison, NMFS' approach is to use the maximum theoretical population, determined through review of current stock assessment reports (SAR;

[www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/marine-mammal-protection/marine-mammal-stock-assessments](http://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/marine-mammal-protection/marine-mammal-stock-assessments)) and model-predicted abundance information (<https://seamap.env.duke.edu/models/Duke/GOM/>). For the latter, for taxa where a density surface model could be produced, we use the maximum mean seasonal (i.e., 3-month) abundance prediction for purposes of comparison as a precautionary smoothing of month-to-month fluctuations and in consideration of a corresponding lack of data in the literature regarding seasonal distribution of marine mammals in the GOM. Information supporting the small numbers determinations is provided in table 1.

TABLE 1—TAKE ANALYSIS

Species	Authorized take	Scaled take <sup>1</sup>	Abundance <sup>2</sup>	Percent abundance
Rice's whale <sup>3</sup>	0	n/a	51	n/a
Sperm whale	733	310	2,207	14.0
<i>Kogia</i> spp	<sup>4</sup> 320	96	4,373	2.7
Beaked whales	4,263	431	3,768	11.4
Rough-toothed dolphin	762	219	4,853	4.5
Bottlenose dolphin	1,807	519	176,108	0.3
Clymene dolphin	2,077	596	11,895	5.0
Atlantic spotted dolphin	718	206	74,785	0.3
Pantropical spotted dolphin	14,864	4,266	102,361	4.2
Spinner dolphin	1,533	440	25,114	1.8
Striped dolphin	941	270	5,229	5.2
Fraser's dolphin	285	82	1,665	4.9
Risso's dolphin	476	141	3,764	3.7
Melon-headed whale	1,352	399	7,003	5.7
Pygmy killer whale	482	142	2,126	6.7
False killer whale	621	183	3,204	5.7
Killer whale	7	n/a	267	2.6
Short-finned pilot whale	254	75	1,981	3.8

<sup>1</sup> Scalar ratios were applied to "Authorized Take" values as described at 86 FR 5322 at 5404 (January 19, 2021) to derive scaled take numbers shown here.

<sup>2</sup> Best abundance estimate. For most taxa, the best abundance estimate for purposes of comparison with take estimates is considered here to be the model-predicted abundance (Roberts *et al.*, 2016). For those taxa where a density surface model predicting abundance by month was produced, the maximum mean seasonal abundance was used. For those taxa where abundance is not predicted by month, only mean annual abundance is available. For Rice's whale and killer whale, the larger estimated SAR abundance estimate is used.

<sup>3</sup> The final rule refers to the GOM Bryde's whale (*Balaenoptera edeni*). These whales were subsequently described as a new species, Rice's whale (*Balaenoptera ricei*) (Rosel *et al.*, 2021).

<sup>4</sup> Includes 21 takes by Level A harassment and 299 takes by Level B harassment. Scalar ratio is applied to takes by Level B harassment only; small numbers determination made on basis of scaled Level B harassment take plus authorized Level A harassment take.

Based on the analysis contained herein of Shell's proposed survey activity described in its LOA application and the anticipated take of marine mammals, NMFS finds that small numbers of marine mammals will be taken relative to the affected species or stock sizes (i.e., less than one-third of the best available abundance estimate) and therefore the taking is of no more than small numbers.

**Authorization**

NMFS has determined that the level of taking for this LOA request is consistent with the findings made for

the total taking allowable under the incidental take regulations and that the amount of take authorized under the LOA is of no more than small numbers. Accordingly, we have issued an LOA to Shell authorizing the take of marine mammals incidental to its geophysical survey activity, as described above.

Dated: May 7, 2024.

**Kimberly Damon-Randall,**

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

[FR Doc. 2024-10303 Filed 5-10-24; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3510-22-P**

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

[RTID 0648-XD876]

**Taking and Importing Marine Mammals; Taking Marine Mammals Incidental to Geophysical Surveys Related to Oil and Gas Activities in the Gulf of Mexico**

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

**ACTION:** Notice of issuance of letter of authorization.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA), as amended, its implementing regulations, and NMFS' MMPA Regulations for Taking Marine Mammals Incidental to Geophysical Surveys Related to Oil and Gas Activities in the Gulf of Mexico (GOM), notification is hereby given that a Letter of Authorization (LOA) has been issued to Anadarko Petroleum Corporation (Anadarko) for the take of marine mammals incidental to geophysical survey activity in the GOM.

**DATES:** The LOA is effective from May 15, 2024, through November 15, 2024.

**ADDRESSES:** The LOA, LOA request, and supporting documentation are available online at: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/action/incidental-take-authorization-oil-and-gas-industry-geophysical-survey-activity-gulf-mexico>. In case of problems accessing these documents, please call the contact listed below (see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Rachel Wachtendonk, 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).

On January 19, 2021, we issued a final rule with regulations to govern the unintentional taking of marine mammals incidental to geophysical survey activities conducted by oil and gas industry operators, and those persons authorized to conduct activities on their behalf (collectively "industry operators"), in U.S. waters of the GOM over the course of 5 years (86 FR 5322, January 19, 2021). The rule was based on our findings that the total taking from the specified activities over the 5-year period will have a negligible impact on the affected species or stock(s) of marine mammals and will not have an unmitigable adverse impact on the availability of those species or stocks for subsistence uses. The rule became effective on April 19, 2021.

Our regulations at 50 CFR 217.180 allow for the issuance of LOAs to industry operators for the incidental take of marine mammals during geophysical survey activities and prescribe the permissible methods of taking and other means of effecting the least practicable adverse impact on marine mammal species or stocks and their habitat (often referred to as mitigation), as well as requirements pertaining to the monitoring and reporting of such taking. Under 50 CFR 217.186(e), issuance of an LOA shall be based on a determination that the level of taking will be consistent with the findings made for the total taking allowable under these regulations and a determination that the amount of take authorized under the LOA is of no more than small numbers.

**Summary of Request and Analysis**

Anadarko plans to conduct a zero offset vertical seismic profile (VSP) within Mississippi Canyon Block MC-216. The survey area has water depths of approximately 1,875 meters (m). Anadarko plans to use either a 12-element, 2,400 cubic inch (in<sup>3</sup>) airgun array, or a 6-element, 1,500 in<sup>3</sup> airgun array. The survey is planned to occur for up to 3 days in May 2024. Please see Anadarko's application for additional detail.

Consistent with the preamble to the final rule, the survey effort proposed by Anadarko in its LOA request was used to develop LOA-specific take estimates based on the acoustic exposure modeling results described in the preamble (86 FR 5322, January 19, 2021). In order to generate the appropriate take number for authorization, the following information was considered: (1) survey type; (2) location (by modeling zone<sup>1</sup>); (3) number of days; and (4) season.<sup>2</sup> The acoustic exposure modeling performed in support of the rule provides 24-hour exposure estimates for each species, specific to each modeled survey type in each zone and season.

No VSP surveys were included in the modeled survey types, and use of existing proxies (*i.e.*, two-dimensional (2D), three-dimensional narrow azimuth (3D NAZ), 3D wide-azimuth (WAZ), Coil) is generally conservative for use in evaluation of VSP survey effort.

Summary descriptions of these modeled survey geometries are available in the preamble to the proposed rule (83 FR 29212, June 22, 2018). Coil was selected as the best available proxy survey type because the spatial coverage of the planned survey is most similar to that associated with the coil survey pattern.

For the planned survey, the seismic source array will be deployed from a drilling rig at or near the borehole, with the seismic receivers (*i.e.*, geophones) deployed in the borehole on wireline at specified depth intervals. The coil survey pattern in the model was assumed to cover approximately 144 kilometers squared (km<sup>2</sup>) per day (compared with approximately 795 km<sup>2</sup>, 199 km<sup>2</sup>, and 845 km<sup>2</sup> per day for the 2D, 3D NAZ, and 3D WAZ survey patterns, respectively). Among the different parameters of the modeled survey patterns (*e.g.*, area covered, line spacing, number of sources, shot interval, total simulated pulses), NMFS considers area covered per day to be most influential on daily modeled exposures exceeding Level B harassment criteria. Because Anadarko's planned survey is expected to cover no additional area as a stationary source, the coil proxy is most representative of the effort planned by Anadarko in terms of predicted Level B harassment.

In addition, all available acoustic exposure modeling results assume use of a 72-element, 8,000 in<sup>3</sup> array. Thus, estimated take numbers for this LOA are

<sup>1</sup> For purposes of acoustic exposure modeling, the GOM was divided into seven zones. Zone 1 is not included in the geographic scope of the rule.

<sup>2</sup> For purposes of acoustic exposure modeling, seasons include winter (December–March) and summer (April–November).

considered conservative due to the differences in both the airgun array (maximum of 12 elements and 2,400 in<sup>3</sup>), and in daily survey area planned by Anadarko (as mentioned above), as compared to those modeled for the rule.

The survey is planned to occur in zone 5 during summer.

For some species, take estimates based solely on the modeling yielded results that are not realistically likely to occur when considered in light of other relevant information available during the rulemaking process regarding marine mammal occurrence in the GOM. The approach used in the acoustic exposure modeling, in which seven modeling zones were defined over the U.S. GOM, necessarily averages fine-scale information about marine mammal distribution over the large area of each modeling zone. This can result in unrealistic projections regarding the likelihood of encountering particularly rare species and/or species not expected to occur outside particular habitats. Thus, although the modeling conducted for the rule is a natural starting point for estimating take, our rule acknowledged that other information could be considered (see, e.g., 86 FR 5322, January 19, 2021, discussing the need to provide flexibility and make efficient use of previous public and agency review of other information and identifying that additional public review is not necessary unless the model or inputs used differ substantially from those that were previously reviewed by NMFS and the public). For this survey, NMFS has other relevant information reviewed during the rulemaking that indicates use of the acoustic exposure modeling to generate a take estimate for Rice's whales and killer whales produces results inconsistent with what is known regarding their occurrence in the GOM. Accordingly, we have adjusted the calculated take estimates for those species as described below.

NMFS' final rule described a "core habitat area" for Rice's whales (formerly known as GOM Bryde's whales)<sup>3</sup> located in the northeastern GOM in waters between 100 and 400 m depth along the continental shelf break (Rosel *et al.*, 2016). However, whaling records suggest that Rice's whales historically had a broader distribution within similar habitat parameters throughout the GOM (Reeves *et al.*, 2011; Rosel and Wilcox, 2014). In addition, habitat-based density modeling has identified

similar habitat (*i.e.*, approximately 100–400 m water depths along the continental shelf break) as being potential Rice's whale habitat (Roberts *et al.*, 2016; Garrison *et al.*, 2023), and Rice's whales have been detected within this depth band throughout the GOM (Soldevilla *et al.*, 2022, 2024). See discussion provided at, e.g., 83 FR 29228, June 22, 2018; 83 FR 29280, June 22, 2018; 86 FR 5418, January 19, 2021.

Although Rice's whales may occur outside of the core habitat area, we expect that any such occurrence would be limited to the narrow band of suitable habitat described above (*i.e.*, 100–400 m) and that, based on the few available records, these occurrences would be rare. Anadarko's planned activities will occur in water depths of approximately 1,875 m in the central GOM. Thus, NMFS does not expect there to be the reasonable potential for take of Rice's whale in association with this survey and, accordingly, does not authorize take of Rice's whale through the LOA.

Killer whales are the most rarely encountered species in the GOM, typically in deep waters of the central GOM (Roberts *et al.*, 2015; Maze-Foley and Mullin, 2006). As discussed in the final rule, the density models produced by Roberts *et al.* (2016) represent the output of models derived from multi-year observations and associated environmental parameters that incorporate corrections for detection bias. However, in the case of killer whales, the model is informed by few data, as indicated by the coefficient of variation associated with the abundance predicted by the model (0.41, the second-highest of any GOM species model; Roberts *et al.*, 2016). The model's authors noted the expected non-uniform distribution of this rarely-encountered species (as discussed above) and expressed that, due to the limited data available to inform the model, it "should be viewed cautiously" (Roberts *et al.*, 2015).

NOAA surveys in the GOM from 1992 to 2009 reported only 16 sightings of killer whales, with an additional 3 encounters during more recent survey effort from 2017 to 2018 (Waring *et al.*, 2013; <https://www.boem.gov/gommapps>). Two other species were also observed on fewer than 20 occasions during the 1992–2009 NOAA surveys (Fraser's dolphin and false killer whale).<sup>4</sup> However, observational data collected by protected species observers (PSOs) on industry

geophysical survey vessels from 2002 to 2015 distinguish the killer whale in terms of rarity. During this period, killer whales were encountered on only 10 occasions, whereas the next most rarely encountered species (Fraser's dolphin) was recorded on 69 occasions (Barkaszi and Kelly, 2019). The false killer whale and pygmy killer whale were the next most rarely encountered species, with 110 records each. The killer whale was the species with the lowest detection frequency during each period over which PSO data were synthesized (2002–2008 and 2009–2015). This information qualitatively informed our rulemaking process, as discussed at 86 FR 5322 and 86 FR 5334 (January 19, 2021), and similarly informs our analysis here.

The rarity of encounter during seismic surveys is not likely to be the product of high bias on the probability of detection. Unlike certain cryptic species with high detection bias, such as *Kogia spp.* or beaked whales, or deep-diving species with high availability bias, such as beaked whales or sperm whales, killer whales are typically available for detection when present and are easily observed. Roberts *et al.* (2015) stated that availability is not a major factor affecting detectability of killer whales from shipboard surveys, as they are not a particularly long-diving species. Baird *et al.* (2005) reported that mean dive durations for 41 fish-eating killer whales for dives greater than or equal to 1 minute in duration was 2.3–2.4 minutes, and Hooker *et al.* (2012) reported that killer whales spent 78 percent of their time at depths between 0 and 10 m. Similarly, Kvadsheim *et al.* (2012) reported data from a study of 4 killer whales, noting that the whales performed 20 times as many dives 1–30 m in depth than to deeper waters, with an average depth during those most common dives of approximately 3 m.

In summary, killer whales are the most rarely encountered species in the GOM and typically occur only in particularly deep water. This survey would take place in deep waters that would overlap with depths in which killer whales typically occur. While this information is reflected through the density model informing the acoustic exposure modeling results, there is relatively high uncertainty associated with the model for this species, and the acoustic exposure modeling applies mean distribution data over areas where the species is in fact less likely to occur. In addition, as noted above in relation to the general take estimation methodology, the assumed proxy source (72-element, 8,000-in<sup>3</sup> array) results in a significant overestimate of the actual

<sup>3</sup> The final rule refers to the GOM Bryde's whale (*Balaenoptera edeni*). These whales were subsequently described as a new species, Rice's whale (*Balaenoptera ricei*) (Rosel *et al.*, 2021).

<sup>4</sup> However, note that these species have been observed over a greater range of water depths in the GOM than have killer whales.

potential for take to occur. NMFS' determination in reflection of the information discussed above, which informed the final rule, is that use of the generic acoustic exposure modeling results for killer whales will generally result in estimated take numbers that are inconsistent with the assumptions made in the rule regarding expected killer whale take (86 FR 5322, January 19, 2021; 86 FR 5403, January 19, 2021). In this case, use of the acoustic exposure modeling produces an estimate of one killer whale exposure. Given the foregoing, it is unlikely that any killer whales would be encountered during this at most 3-day survey, and accordingly no take of killer whales is authorized through this LOA.

In addition, in this case, use of the exposure modeling produces results that are smaller than average GOM group sizes for one species (Maze-Foley and Mullin, 2006). NMFS' typical practice in such a situation is to increase exposure estimates to the assumed average group size for a species in order to ensure that, if the species is encountered, exposures will not exceed the authorized take number. However, other relevant considerations here lead to a determination that increasing the estimated exposures to the average group size would likely lead to an overestimate of actual potential take. In this circumstance, the very short survey duration (maximum of 3 days) and

relatively small Level B harassment isopleths produced through use of the (at most) 12-element, 2,400-in<sup>3</sup> airgun array (compared with the modeled 72-element, 8,000 in<sup>3</sup> array) mean that it is unlikely that certain species would be encountered at all, much less that the encounter would result in exposure of a greater number of individuals than is estimated through use of the exposure modeling results. As a result, in this case NMFS has not increased the estimated exposure values to assumed average group size in authorizing take.

Based on the results of our analysis, NMFS has determined that the level of taking expected for this survey and authorized through the LOA is consistent with the findings made for the total taking allowable under the regulations for the affected species or stocks of marine mammals. See table 1 in this notice and table 9 of the rule (86 FR 5322, January 19, 2021).

**Small Numbers Determination**

Under the GOM rule, NMFS may not authorize incidental take of marine mammals in an LOA if it will exceed "small numbers." In short, when an acceptable estimate of the individual marine mammals taken is available, if the estimated number of individual animals taken is up to, but not greater than, one-third of the best available abundance estimate, NMFS will determine that the numbers of marine

mammals taken of a species or stock are small. For more information please see NMFS' discussion of the MMPA's small numbers requirement provided in the final rule (86 FR 5322, January 19, 2021; 86 FR 5438, January 19, 2021).

The take numbers for authorization, which are determined as described above, are used by NMFS in making the necessary small numbers determinations through comparison with the best available abundance estimates (see discussion at 86 FR 5322, January 19, 2021 and 86 FR 5391, January 19, 2021). For this comparison, NMFS' approach is to use the maximum theoretical population, determined through review of current stock assessment reports (SAR; <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/marine-mammal-protection/marine-mammal-stock-assessments>) and model-predicted abundance information (<https://seamap.env.duke.edu/models/Duke/GOM>). For the latter, for taxa where a density surface model could be produced, we use the maximum mean seasonal (*i.e.*, 3-month) abundance prediction for purposes of comparison as a precautionary smoothing of month-to-month fluctuations and in consideration of a corresponding lack of data in the literature regarding seasonal distribution of marine mammals in the GOM. Information supporting the small numbers determinations is provided in table 1.

TABLE 1—TAKE ANALYSIS

Species	Authorized take <sup>a</sup>	Abundance <sup>b</sup>	Percent abundance
Rice's whale .....	0	51	n/a
Sperm whale .....	79	2,207	3.6
<i>Kogia</i> spp. ....	<sup>c</sup> 29	4,373	0.7
Beaked whales .....	338	3,768	9.0
Rough-toothed dolphin .....	58	4,853	1.2
Bottlenose dolphin .....	267	176,108	0.2
Clymene dolphin .....	160	11,895	1.3
Atlantic spotted dolphin .....	110	74,785	0.1
Pantropical spotted dolphin .....	726	102,361	0.7
Spinner dolphin .....	195	25,114	0.8
Striped dolphin .....	62	5,229	1.2
Fraser's dolphin .....	<sup>d</sup> 19	1,665	1.1
Risso's dolphin .....	47	3,764	1.2
Melon-headed whale .....	109	7,003	1.6
Pygmy killer whale .....	25	2,126	1.2
False killer whale .....	40	3,204	1.3
Killer whale .....	0	267	n/a
Short-finned pilot whale .....	32	1,981	1.6

<sup>a</sup> Scalar ratios were not applied in this case due to brief survey duration.

<sup>b</sup> Best abundance estimate. For most taxa, the best abundance estimate for purposes of comparison with take estimates is considered here to be the model-predicted abundance (Roberts *et al.*, 2016). For those taxa where a density surface model predicting abundance by month was produced, the maximum mean seasonal abundance was used. For those taxa where abundance is not predicted by month, only mean annual abundance is available. For Rice's whale and killer whale, the larger estimated SAR abundance estimate is used.

<sup>c</sup> Includes 2 takes by Level A harassment and 27 takes by Level B harassment.

<sup>d</sup> Modeled exposure estimate less than assumed average group size (Maze-Foley and Mullin, 2006).

Based on the analysis contained herein of Anadarko's proposed survey activity described in its LOA application and the anticipated take of marine mammals, NMFS finds that small numbers of marine mammals will be taken relative to the affected species or stock sizes (*i.e.*, less than one-third of the best available abundance estimate) and therefore the taking is of no more than small numbers.

#### Authorization

NMFS has determined that the level of taking for this LOA request is consistent with the findings made for the total taking allowable under the incidental take regulations and that the amount of take authorized under the LOA is of no more than small numbers. Accordingly, we have issued an LOA to Anadarko authorizing the take of marine mammals incidental to its geophysical survey activity, as described above.

Dated: May 6, 2024

#### Kimberly Damon-Randall,

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

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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648-XD954]

#### Western Pacific Fishery Management Council; Public Meetings

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

**ACTION:** Notice of public meetings.

**SUMMARY:** The Western Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) will hold its Education Committee (EC) and Social Science Planning Committee (SSPC) meetings to discuss and make recommendations on fishery management issues in the Western Pacific Region.

**DATES:** The EC meeting will be held on May 29, 2024, from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., Hawaii Standard Time (HST). The SSPC meeting will be held on May 30, 2024, from 12 p.m. to 4 p.m., HST. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** for the agenda.

**ADDRESSES:** The EC meeting will be held by web conference via Webex.

The SSPC meeting will be held as a hybrid meeting for SSPC members and the public, with a remote participation option available via Webex. In-person

attendance will be hosted at the Council office, 1164 Bishop Street, Suite 1400, Honolulu, HI 96813.

Instructions for connecting to the web conference and providing oral public comments will be posted on the Council website at [www.wpcouncil.org](http://www.wpcouncil.org). For assistance with the web conference connection, contact the Council office at (808) 522-8220.

#### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Kitty M. Simonds, Executive Director, Western Pacific Fishery Management Council; telephone: (808) 522-8220.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** A public comment period will be provided in the agendas. The order in which agenda items are addressed may change. The meetings will run as late as necessary to complete scheduled business.

#### Agenda for the EC Meeting

Wednesday, May 29, 2024, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., HST

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Review of the Last Education Committee Recommendations and Meeting
  - A. Council Education Committee Memorandum of Understanding Update
  - B. Working Group Reports
    - i. Input on Education Initiatives in Council 2025-2028 Program Plan
    - ii. Incorporate Fisheries Science into K-12 and Higher Education Classrooms
    - iii. Review Course Articulation Agreements Between 2-year and 4-year Higher Education Programs
  - C. Marine Resource Education Program in Pacific Islands Update
3. Council 2025-2028 Program Plan Update
4. Other Business
5. Public Comment
6. Discussion and Recommendations

#### Agenda for the SSPC Meeting

Thursday, May 30, 2024, 12 p.m. to 4 p.m., HST

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Annual Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation Reports
  - A. Socioeconomic Modules 2023 Report Updates
  - B. Fisher Observations
4. Review of Draft 2025-2029 Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act Research Priorities
5. Social, Economic, Ecological, and Management Process Review
6. Project Updates
7. Other Business
8. Public Comment

## 9. Discussion and Recommendations

### Special Accommodations

These meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Kitty M. Simonds, (808) 522-8220 (voice) or (808) 522-8226 (fax), at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

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

Dated: May 8, 2024.

#### Rey Israel Marquez,

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

[FR Doc. 2024-10391 Filed 5-10-24; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648-XD900]

#### Takes of Marine Mammals Incidental to Specified Activities; Taking Marine Mammals Incidental to the Revolution Wind Offshore Wind Energy Project Offshore of Rhode Island

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

**ACTION:** Notice; modification of letter of authorization.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA), as amended, its implementing regulations, and NMFS' MMPA Regulations for Taking Marine Mammals Incidental to Construction of the Revolution Wind Project Offshore of Rhode Island, notification is hereby given that upon request from Revolution Wind, LLC (Revolution Wind), NMFS has modified a Letter of Authorization (LOA) issued to Revolution Wind for the take of marine mammals incidental to activities associated with construction of the Revolution Wind Offshore Wind Energy Project (hereafter known as the "Project") in Federal and State waters offshore Rhode Island. Specifically, NMFS has removed the requirement that each real-time passive acoustic monitoring (PAM) data stream must be monitored by separate PAM operators. NMFS has determined that this modification to the aforementioned monitoring requirement does not change the findings made for the regulations and does not result in any change in the total estimated number of takes of marine mammals.