

characterize daily and seasonal movement and distribution of affected marine mammals, it can be difficult to distinguish between the number of individuals harassed and the instances of harassment, and this can result in a take estimate that overestimates the number of individuals harassed. In particular, for stationary activities, such as the planned project, it is more likely that some smaller number of individuals may accrue a number of incidences of

harassment per individual than for each incidence to accrue to a new individual. This is especially true for those individuals display some degree of residency or site fidelity and the impetus to use the site is stronger than the deterrence presented by the harassing activity, as is the case with harbor seals that use Children’s Pool as a haulout.

For the reasons described above, we expect that there will almost certainly

be some overlap in individuals present day-to-day at the project site, and the total numbers of authorized takes are expected to occur only within a small portion of the overall regional stocks. Thus while we authorize the instances of incidental take shown in Table 5, we believe that the number of individual marine mammals that will be incidentally taken by the project will be substantially lower than these numbers.

TABLE 5—ESTIMATED NUMBERS OF TAKE AND PERCENTAGES OF MARINE MAMMAL STOCKS THAT MAY BE TAKEN

Species	Level B take authorized	Stock abundance estimate ¹	Percentage of stock or population
Harbor seal	1,620	30,968	5
California sea lion	36	296,750	<1
Northern elephant seal	14	179,000	<1

¹ NMFS 2015 marine mammal stock assessment reports (Carretta *et al.*, 2016) available online at: www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/sars/.

Based on the analysis contained herein of the planned activity (including the mitigation and monitoring measures) and the anticipated take of marine mammals, NMFS finds that small numbers of marine mammals will be taken relative to the population size of the affected species or stocks.

Unmitigable Adverse Impact Analysis and Determination

There are no relevant subsistence uses of the affected marine mammal stocks or species implicated by this action. Therefore, NMFS has determined that the total taking of affected species or stocks will not have an unmitigable adverse impact on the availability of such species or stocks for taking for subsistence purposes.

Endangered Species Act (ESA)

Section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA: 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) requires that each Federal agency insure that any action it authorizes, 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 with our ESA Interagency Cooperation Division whenever we propose to authorize take for endangered or threatened species.

No incidental take of ESA-listed species is authorized or expected to result from this activity. Therefore, NMFS has determined that formal consultation under section 7 of the ESA is not required for this action.

Authorization

NMFS has issued an IHA to the City of San Diego for the take of small numbers of three marine mammal species incidental to conducting demolition and construction activities at Coast Boulevard, La Jolla, California, from June 1, 2017 through December 14, 2017, provided the previously mentioned mitigation, monitoring, and reporting requirements.

Dated: June 23, 2017.

Donna S. Wieting,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XF503

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 Science and Statistical Committee (SSC) of the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council’s (Council) will hold a meeting.

DATES: The meeting will be held on Wednesday and Thursday, July 19–20, 2017, beginning at 1 p.m. on July 19 and concluding by 12:30 p.m. on July 20. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** for agenda details.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will take place at the Royal Sonesta Harbor Court Baltimore, 550 Light Street, Baltimore, MD 21202; telephone: (410) 234-0550.

Council address: Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, 800 N. State Street, Suite 201, Dover, DE 19901; telephone: (302) 674-2331; Web site: 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 purpose of this meeting is to make multi-year (2018–19) ABC recommendations for scup based on updated stock assessment information. The SSC will also review the currently implemented 2018 ABCs for summer flounder, black sea bass and bluefish based on the most recent fishery and survey data for each of these species. In addition, topics to be discussed include a discussion on the potential development of chub mackerel reference points, a review of the current generic Terms of Reference used for setting specifications and an SSC OFL Working Group progress report.

A detailed agenda and background documents will be made available on the Council’s Web site (www.mafmc.org) prior to the meeting.

Special Accommodations

These meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aid should be directed to M. Jan Saunders, (302) 526-5251, at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

Dated: June 23, 2017.

Jeffrey N. Lonergan,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XF318

Takes of Marine Mammals Incidental to Specified Activities; Taking Marine Mammals Incidental to the San Francisco Ferry Terminal Expansion Project, South Basin Improvements Project

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

ACTION: Notice; Issuance of an Incidental Harassment Authorization.

SUMMARY: NMFS received a request from the San Francisco Bay Area Water Emergency Transportation Authority (WETA) for authorization to take marine mammals incidental to construction activities as part of a ferry terminal expansion and improvements project. Pursuant to the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA), NMFS is announcing our issuance of an incidental harassment authorization (IHA) to WETA to incidentally take marine mammals, by Level B harassment only, during the specified activity.

DATES: This Authorization is effective from June 1, 2017 through May 31, 2018.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Laura McCue, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, (301) 427-8401. Electronic copies of the applications and supporting documents, as well as a list of the references cited in this document, may be obtained online at: www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/permits/incidental/construction.htm. In case of problems accessing these documents, please call the contact listed above.

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.

The MMPA states that the term “take” means to harass, hunt, capture, kill or attempt to harass, hunt, capture, or kill any marine mammal.

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).

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 with respect to environmental consequences on the human environment.

NMFS published an Environmental Assessment (EA) in 2016 on WETA’s ferry terminal construction activities. NMFS found that there would be no significant impacts to the human environment and signed a finding of no significant impact (FONSI) on June 28, 2016. Because the activities and analysis are the same as WETA’s 2016 activities, NMFS used the existing EA and signed a FONSI in May 2017 for WETA’s 2017 activities.

Summary of Request

NMFS received a request from WETA for an IHA to take marine mammals

incidental to pile driving and removal in association with the San Francisco Ferry Terminal Expansion Project, South Basin Improvements Project (Project) in San Francisco Bay, California. In-water work associated with the project is expected to be completed within 23 months. This IHA is for the first phase of construction activities (June 1, 2017–May 31, 2018).

The use of both vibratory and impact pile driving and removal is expected to produce underwater sound at levels that have the potential to result in behavioral harassment of marine mammals. Seven species of marine mammals have the potential to be affected by the specified activities: Harbor seal (*Phoca vitulina*), California sea lion (*Zalophus californianus*), Northern elephant seal (*Mirounga angustirostris*), Northern fur seal (*Callorhinus ursinus*), harbor porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena*), gray whale (*Eschrichtius robustus*), and bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*). These species may occur year round in the action area.

WETA received authorization for take of marine mammals incidental to these same activities in 2016 (81 FR 43993; July 6, 2016); however construction activities did not occur. Therefore, the specified activities described in the previous IHA are identical to the activities described here. In addition, similar construction and pile driving activities in San Francisco Bay have been authorized by NMFS in the past. These projects include construction activities at the Exploratorium (75 FR 66065; October 27, 2010), Pier 36 (77 FR 20361; April 4, 2012), and the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge (71 FR 26750; May 8, 2006, 72 FR 25748; August 9, 2007, 74 FR 41684; August 18, 2009, 76 FR 7156; February 9, 2011, 78 FR 2371; January 11, 2013, 79 FR 2421; January 14, 2014, and 80 FR 43710; July 23, 2015).

Description of the Specified Activity

Overview

The WETA is expanding berthing capacity at the Downtown San Francisco Ferry Terminal (Ferry Terminal), located at the San Francisco Ferry Building (Ferry Building), to support existing and future planned water transit services operated on San Francisco Bay by WETA and WETA’s emergency operations. A detailed description of the planned construction project is provided in the **Federal Register** notice for the proposed IHA (82 FR 17799; April 13, 2017). Since that time, no changes have been made to the planned activities. Therefore, a detailed description is not provided here. Please