

that fishery. NMFS determined that Suriname has addressed the issues for which it was denied a comparability finding and with this notice announces that the drift gillnet fishery, Fishery ID 2899, has received a comparability finding and the corresponding import prohibition is removed effective June 22, 2026. This comparability finding report can be found at: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/international-affairs/marine-mammal-protection-act-comparability-finding-determinations-harvesting>.

Dated: June 16, 2026.

Samuel D. Rauch III,

Deputy Assistant Administrator for
Regulatory Programs, National Marine
Fisheries Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648-XF709]

Takes of Marine Mammals Incidental to Specified Activities; Taking Marine Mammals Incidental to a Marine Geophysical Survey in the Western Central Atlantic Ocean

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

ACTION: Notice; issuance of incidental
harassment authorization.

SUMMARY: In accordance with
regulations implementing the Marine
Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) as
amended, notification is hereby given
that NMFS has issued an incidental
harassment authorization (IHA) to the
Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory (L-
DEO) for authorization to take marine
mammals incidental to a marine
geophysical survey off the Eastern North
American Margin in the Western Central
Atlantic Ocean.

DATES: This authorization is effective for
1 year from the date of notification by
the IHA-holder, not to exceed 1 year
from the date of issuance (June 16,
2026).

ADDRESSES: Electronic copies of the
application and supporting documents,
as well as a list of the references cited
in this document, may be obtained
online at: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/marine-mammal-protection/incidental-take-authorizations-research-and-other-activities#active-authorizations>. In case

of problems accessing these documents,
please call the contact listed below.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:
Jenna Harlacher, Office of Protected
Resources, NMFS, (301) 427-8401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

MMPA Background and Determinations

The MMPA prohibits the “take” of
marine mammals, with certain
exceptions. Among the exceptions is
section 101(a)(5)(D) of the MMPA (16
U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*) which directs the
Secretary of Commerce (as delegated to
NMFS) to allow, upon request, the
incidental, but not intentional, taking by
harassment 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 the public has an
opportunity to comment on the
proposed IHA.

Specifically, NMFS will issue an IHA
if it 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
other “means of effecting the least
[practicable] adverse impact” on the
affected species or stocks and their
habitat, paying particular attention to
rookeries, mating grounds, and areas of
similar significance, and on the
availability of such species or stocks for
taking for certain subsistence uses
(referred to here as “mitigation”). NMFS
must also prescribe requirements
pertaining to the monitoring and
reporting of such takings. The
definitions of key terms, such as “take,”
“harassment,” and “negligible impact,”
can be found in the MMPA and the
NMFS’ implementing regulations (see
16 U.S.C. 1362; 50 CFR 216.103).

On April 9, 2026, a notice of NMFS’
proposal to issue an IHA to L-DEO for
take of marine mammals incidental to a
marine geophysical survey off the
Eastern North American Margin in the
Western Central Atlantic Ocean was
published in the **Federal Register** (91
FR 18024). In that notice, NMFS
indicated the estimated numbers, type,
and methods of incidental take
proposed for each species or stock, as
well as the mitigation, monitoring, and
reporting measures that would be
required should the IHA be issued. The
Federal Register notice also included
analysis to support NMFS’ preliminary
conclusions and determinations that the

IHA, if issued, would satisfy the
requirements of section 101(a)(5)(D) of
the MMPA for issuance of the IHA. The
Federal Register notice included web
links to a draft IHA for review, as well
as other supporting documents.

No comments were received during
the public comment period. There are
no changes to the specified activity, the
species taken, the proposed numbers,
type, or methods of take, or the
mitigation, monitoring, or reporting
measures in the proposed IHA notice.
No new information that would change
any of the preliminary analyses,
conclusions, or determinations in the
proposed IHA notice has become
available since that notice was
published, and therefore, the
preliminary analyses, conclusions, and
determinations included in the
proposed IHA are considered final.

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 (*i.e.*, the issuance of an
IHA) with respect to potential impacts
on the human environment.

This action is consistent with
categories of activities identified in
Categorical Exclusion B4 (IHAs with no
anticipated serious injury or mortality)
of the Companion Manual for NAO 216-
6A, which do not individually or
cumulatively have the potential for
significant impacts on the quality of the
human environment and for which we
have not identified any extraordinary
circumstances that would preclude this
categorical exclusion. Accordingly,
NMFS has determined that the issuance
of the IHA qualifies to be categorically
excluded from further NEPA review.

Endangered Species Act

Section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered
Species Act of 1973 (ESA; 16 U.S.C.
1531 *et seq.*) requires that each Federal
agency ensures 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
whenever we propose to authorize take
for endangered or threatened species.

The NMFS Office of Protected
Resources (OPR) ESA Interagency
Cooperation Division has issued a
Biological Opinion under section 7 of
the ESA, on the issuance of an IHA to
L-DEO under section 101(a)(5)(D) of the

MMPA by the NMFS OPR Permits and Conservation Division. The Biological Opinion concluded that the action is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of ESA-listed fin whales, sei whales, sperm whales and blue whales.

Authorization

Accordingly, consistent with the requirements of section 101(a)(5)(D) of the MMPA, NMFS has issued an IHA to L-DEO for authorization to take marine mammals incidental to a marine geophysical survey off the Eastern North American Margin in the Western Central Atlantic Ocean.

Dated: June 16, 2026.

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-XF675]

Takes of Marine Mammals Incidental to Specified Activities; Taking Marine Mammals Incidental to HEX Operating, LLC Natural Gas Activities in Cook Inlet, Alaska

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

ACTION: Notice; issuance of renewal incidental harassment authorization.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the regulations implementing the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA), notification is hereby given that NMFS has issued a renewal incidental harassment authorization (IHA) to HEX Operating, LLC (formerly Furie Operating Alaska, LLC (Furie)) to incidentally harass marine mammals incidental to natural gas activities in Cook Inlet, Alaska.

DATES: This renewal IHA is valid from September 13, 2026 through September 12, 2027.

ADDRESSES: Electronic copies of the original application, renewal request, and supporting documents (including NMFS **Federal Register** notices of the original proposed and final authorizations, and the previous IHA), as well as a list of the references cited in this document, may be obtained online at: [https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/permit/incidental-take-authorizations-under-](https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/permit/incidental-take-authorizations-under-marine-mammal-protection-act)

[marine-mammal-protection-act](https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/permit/incidental-take-authorizations-under-marine-mammal-protection-act). In case of problems accessing these documents, please call the contact listed below.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Leah Davis, 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 promulgated or, if the taking is limited to harassment, an incidental harassment authorization is issued.

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 other “means of effecting the least practicable adverse impact” on the affected species or stocks and their habitat, paying particular attention to rookeries, mating grounds, and areas of similar significance, and on the availability of such species or stocks for taking for certain subsistence uses (referred to here as “mitigation measures”). NMFS must also prescribe requirements pertaining to monitoring and reporting of such takings. The definition of key terms such as “take,” “harassment,” and “negligible impact” can be found in the MMPA and NMFS’s implementing regulations (*see* 16 U.S.C 1362; 50 CFR 216.3; 50 CFR 216.103).

NMFS’ regulations implementing the MMPA at 50 CFR 216.107(e) indicate that IHAs may be renewed for additional periods of time not to exceed 1 year for each reauthorization. In the notice of proposed IHAs for the initial IHAs (89 FR 51102, June 14, 2024), NMFS described the circumstances under which we would consider issuing a renewal for this activity and requested public comment on a potential renewal under those circumstances. Specifically, on a case-by-case basis, NMFS may issue a one-time 1-year renewal IHA following notice to the public providing an additional 15 days for public comments when (1) up to another year

of identical, or nearly identical, activities as described in the Detailed Description of Specified Activities section of the initial IHA issuance notice is planned or (2) the activities as described in the Description of the Specified Activities and Anticipated Impacts section of the initial IHA issuance notice would not be completed by the time the initial IHA expires and a renewal would allow for completion of the activities beyond that described in the **DATES** section of the notice of issuance of the initial IHA, provided all of the following conditions are met:

1. A request for renewal is received no later than 60 days prior to the needed renewal IHA effective date (recognizing that the renewal IHA expiration date cannot extend beyond 1 year from expiration of the initial IHA).

2. The request for renewal must include the following:

- An explanation that the activities to be conducted under the requested renewal IHA are identical to the activities analyzed under the initial IHA, are a subset of the activities, or include changes so minor (*e.g.*, reduction in pile size) that the changes do not affect the previous analyses, mitigation and monitoring requirements, or take estimates (with the exception of reducing the type or amount of take).

- A preliminary monitoring report showing the results of the required monitoring to date and an explanation showing that the monitoring results do not indicate impacts of a scale or nature not previously analyzed or authorized.

3. Upon review of the request for renewal, the status of the affected species or stocks, and any other pertinent information, NMFS determines that there are no more than minor changes in the activities, the mitigation and monitoring measures will remain the same and appropriate, and the findings in the initial IHA remain valid.

An additional public comment period of 15 days (for a total of 45 days), with direct notice by email, phone, or postal service to commenters on the initial IHA, is provided to allow for any additional comments on the proposed renewal. A description of the renewal process may be found on our website at: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/marine-mammal-protection/incidental-harassment-authorization-renewals>.

History of Request

On September 12, 2024, NMFS issued two consecutive IHAs to Furie to take marine mammals incidental to activities supporting natural gas production in