

government, Native Hawaiian organizations; business or other for-profit organizations.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 192.

Estimated Time per Response: Average time across all permit types: 7 hours. Permit modification requests and final reports: 10 hours; and annual reports: 5 hours. Time per response for entry and exit notifications: 5 minutes. Time per response for VMS certification: 5 minutes per response.

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 170

Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public: \$5,905 in recordkeeping/reporting costs and vessel monitoring system installation and maintenance.

Respondent's Obligation: Required to Obtain or Retain Benefits, or Mandatory.

Legal Authority: 54 U.S.C. 320301 *et seq.*; 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*; 16 U.S.C. 742f, 16 U.S.C. 742l; 16 U.S.C. 1431 *et seq.*

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 Information Collection Review. 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,

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

[FR Doc. 2026–15956 Filed 8–5–26; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–NK–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648–XF917]

Marine Mammals; File No. 29707

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

ACTION: Notice; receipt of application.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the Center for Coastal Studies, 5 Holway Avenue, Provincetown, MA 02657, (Responsible Party: Anne-Marie Runfola), has applied in due form for a permit to conduct research on marine mammals.

DATES: Written comments must be received on or before September 8, 2026.

ADDRESSES: The application and related documents are available for review 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. 29707 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:

Shasta McClenahan, Ph.D., or Courtney Smith, Ph.D., (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.*), and the regulations governing the taking, importing, and exporting of endangered and threatened species (50 CFR parts 222–226).

The applicant requests a 10-year permit to conduct research on 23

species of marine mammals in U.S. and international waters of the North Atlantic Ocean. ESA-listed species include: bowhead (*Balaena mysticetus*), blue (*Balaenoptera musculus*), fin (*Balaenoptera physalus*), North Atlantic right (*Eubalaena glacialis*), sei (*Balaenoptera borealis*), and sperm (*Physeter macrocephalus*) whales. The objectives are to study marine mammal occurrence, distribution, abundance, behavior, habitat use, foraging ecology, and health, with a focus on North Atlantic right whales. Cetaceans may be taken during vessel and aerial surveys, including uncrewed aircraft systems, for counts, photography, videography, photogrammetry, thermal imaging, observations, biological sampling (feces, sloughed skin, and skin and blubber biopsies), and suction-cup tagging. Four species of pinnipeds may be unintentionally harassed and opportunistically studied during research. See the application for complete numbers of animals requested by species, life stage, and procedure.

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: August 3, 2026.

Larissa Plants,

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

[FR Doc. 2026–15917 Filed 8–5–26; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–22–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648–XF679]

Takes of Marine Mammals Incidental to Specified Activities; Taking Marine Mammals Incidental to U.S. Coast Guard Fast Response Cutter Homeporting in Sitka, Alaska

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

ACTION: Notice; issuance of a modified 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 a modified incidental harassment authorization (IHA) to the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) for authorization to take marine mammals incidental to construction activities associated with fast response cutter (FRC) homeporting in Sitka, Alaska.

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 (August 3, 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-construction-activities>. In case of problems accessing these documents, please call the contact listed below.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Alyssa Clevens, 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 shall 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 July 25, 2024, a notice of NMFS’ proposal to issue two IHAs to the USCG for take of marine mammals incidental to pile driving (installation and removal) associated with construction of two FRC homeporting docks in Seward and Sitka, Alaska, was published in the **Federal Register** (89 FR 60359). On December 20, 2024, NMFS published a **Federal Register** notice announcing the issuance of the IHAs to the USCG, one for Moorings Sitka effective from September 1, 2026, through August 31, 2027, and one for Moorings Seward effective from March 1, 2027, through February 29, 2028 (89 FR 104090).

On April 2, 2026, a notice of NMFS’ proposal to modify the IHA for Moorings Sitka was published in the **Federal Register** (91 FR 16672). 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 modified IHA be issued. The **Federal Register** notice also included analysis to support NMFS’ preliminary conclusions and determinations that the modified 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 modified IHA for review, as well as other supporting documents.

No comments were received during the public comment period. With the exception of the minor changes described below, 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 modification notice has become available since that notice was published, and therefore, the preliminary analyses, conclusions, and determinations included in the proposed IHA modification are considered final.

Changes From the Proposed IHA to the Final IHA

Since publication of the proposed IHA modification, the applicant has

changed the fender piles planned for use from 16-inch (40.64-centimeter (cm)) steel piles to 14- to 16-inch (35.6- to 40.64-cm) plastic piles. The quantity of fender piles to be installed (60) and installation method (vibratory) remain the same, as does the maximum numbers of fender piles that will be installed per day (8). The time required to install the fender piles will decrease from 30 minutes to 15 minutes per pile, and the installation rate will increase from 5 piles per day to 6 piles per day. The sound source level for 14- to 16-inch plastic piles is 162 decibels referenced to 1 micropascal at 10 meters (dB re 1 μ Pa at 10 m) root-mean-square sound pressure level (RMS SPL), which is a decrease of 1 dB from the 16-inch steel piles proposed for use as fender piles. Therefore, the calculated distances to the Level A and Level B harassment zones sizes will be smaller than what was included in the notice of proposed IHA modification (91 FR 16672, April 2, 2026). The ensonified areas were not directly used in the calculation of estimated take because take was estimated with species occurrence data instead of density. Thus, there is no change to estimated take as a result of the slightly smaller Level A and Level B harassment zones. The USCG will use the same mitigation, monitoring, and reporting measures, including the shutdown and harassment zones, shown in the notice of proposed IHA modification and as described in the Marine Mammal Monitoring Plan. The take estimates included in the notice of proposed IHA modification remain the same. The change of pile type has been reflected in table 2 of the IHA.

NMFS has also revised the distribution of take across killer whale (*Orcinus orca*) stocks expected in the project area. In the notice of proposed IHA modification, the percent of each stock impacted for killer whales was estimated assuming each stock was taken in proportion to its population size from the total take. We found that methodology was flawed because stock size and regional occurrence are not directly proportionate. Given the lack of data available on site-specific stock occurrence, we assume that all takes (106 takes by Level B harassment only) could occur to each stock of killer whale. As described in the Small Numbers section of the notice of proposed IHA modification (91 FR 16672, April 2, 2026) and herein, NMFS determined the amount of take authorized is below one-third of the estimated stock abundance of all killer whale stocks (table 1). For all stocks

other than the Eastern North Pacific Northern Resident stock of killer whale, the number of takes proposed for

authorization would be considered small relative to the relevant stocks' abundances, even in the unlikely

scenario that each estimated taking occurred to a new individual.

TABLE 1—ESTIMATED TAKE OF KILLER WHALES FROM THE SPECIFIED ACTIVITIES

Stock	Level B harassment	SAR abundance	Instances of take as a percentage of population
Eastern North Pacific Alaska Resident	106	1,920	5.5
Eastern North Pacific Gulf of Alaska, Aleutian Islands and Bering Sea Transient		587	18.1
Eastern North Pacific Northern Resident		302	35.1
West Coast Transient		349	30.1

The Eastern North Pacific Northern Resident stock of killer whale occurs from Washington State through part of Southeast Alaska. Movements of killer whales, for both transient and resident stocks, between widely separated geographical areas have been documented; however, given the relatively sheltered location of the project site in Southeast Alaska, it is unlikely that numerous discrete groups of individuals sufficient to exceed one-third of the stock abundance would occur within the immediate vicinity of the project. It is more likely that individual groups that occur in the area would remain for periods of time and potentially be resighted on multiple days. As such, and given that the authorized takes would be allocated among four distinct killer whale stocks, the numbers of individuals taken would likely comprise less than one-third of the best available population abundance estimate of the Eastern North Pacific Northern Resident stock of killer whale.

Finally, a rounding error in the calculation of estimated take by Level B harassment of humpback whales was corrected to 60 takes by Level B harassment, which is a reduction of 1 take from the estimated take of marine mammals in the proposed authorization. This correction led to a reduction in the number of estimated takes of the Hawai'i stock of humpback whales by 1, thus, the authorized take of the Hawai'i stock of humpback whales is 59 takes by 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 (*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 modification of the IHA continues to qualify 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, in this case with the NMFS Alaska Regional Office.

There are two marine mammal species (Western DPS Steller sea lion and Mexico-North Pacific stock of humpback whale) with confirmed occurrence in the project area that are listed under the ESA. The NMFS Alaska Regional Office Protected Resources Division issued a Biological Opinion on July 28, 2026, under section 7 of the ESA, on the issuance of an IHA modification to the USCG under section 101(a)(5)(D) of the MMPA by the NMFS Permits and Conservation Division. The Biological Opinion concluded that the proposed action is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of Western DPS Steller sea lion or Mexico North Pacific stock of humpback whale, and is not likely to destroy or adversely modify critical habitat for Western DPS Steller sea lion or Mexico North Pacific stock of humpback whale.

Authorization

Accordingly, consistent with the requirements of section 101(a)(5)(D) of the MMPA, NMFS has issued a modified IHA to the USCG for authorization to take marine mammals incidental to construction of a FRC homeporting dock in Sitka.

Dated: August 3, 2026.

Kimberly Damon-Randall,

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

[FR Doc. 2026–15987 Filed 8–5–26; 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 Vessel Monitoring Requirement in the Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery

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 October 5, 2026.