

Pacific Ocean region, including areas of the Strait of Juan de Fuca, Puget Sound, and Western Behm Canal in southeastern Alaska (see Figure 2–1 of the Navy’s application). The Study Area includes four existing range complexes and facilities: The Northwest Training Range Complex, the Keyport Range Complex, Carr Inlet Operations Area, and the Southeast Alaska Acoustic Measurement Facility (Western Behm Canal, Alaska). In addition to these range complexes, the Study Area also includes Navy pierside locations where sonar maintenance and testing occurs as part of overhaul, modernization, maintenance, and repair activities at Naval Base Kitsap, Bremerton; Naval Base Kitsap, Bangor; and Naval Station Everett.

The following types of training and testing activities, which are classified as military readiness activities pursuant to section 315(f) of Pub. L. 101–314 (16 U.S.C. 703), are included in the specified activity described in the Navy’s application: Anti-submarine warfare (sonar and other transducers, underwater detonations), mine warfare (sonar and other transducers, underwater detonations), surface warfare (underwater detonations), and other (sonar and other transducers).

The Navy’s application includes proposed mitigation measures for marine mammals that would be implemented during training and testing activities in the NWTT Study Area (see Section 11 of the Navy’s application). Proposed procedural mitigation measures and geographic mitigation areas generally include: (1) The use of Lookouts to observe for biological resources and communicate the need for mitigation implementation; (2) powerdowns, shutdowns, and delay of starts to avoid exposure of marine mammals to high levels of sound or explosive blasts more likely to result in injury or more serious behavioral disruption; and (3) limiting the use of active sonar or explosives in certain biologically important areas to reduce the probability or severity of impacts when they are more likely to contribute to fitness impacts (see Figure 11–1 of the Navy’s application).

The Navy also proposes to undertake monitoring and reporting efforts to track compliance with incidental take authorizations and to help investigate the effectiveness of implemented mitigation measures in the NWTT Study Area. This includes Adaptive Management, the Integrated Comprehensive Monitoring Program, the Strategic Planning Process, and Annual Monitoring and Activity Reports. As an example, under the

Integrated Comprehensive Monitoring Program, the monitoring relating to the effects of Navy training and testing activities on protected marine species are designed to increase the understanding of the likely occurrence of marine mammals in the vicinity of the action (*i.e.*, presence, abundance, distribution, and density of species) and to increase the understanding of the nature, scope, or context of the likely exposure of marine mammals to any of the potential stressors associated with the action.

Information Solicited

Interested persons may submit information, suggestions, and comments concerning the Navy’s request (see **ADDRESSES**). NMFS will consider all information, suggestions, and comments related to the request during the development of proposed regulations governing the incidental taking of marine mammals by the Navy, if appropriate.

Dated: August 1, 2019.

Donna S. Wieting,

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

[FR Doc. 2019–16759 Filed 8–5–19; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

U.S. Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS®) Advisory Committee

AGENCY: National Ocean Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of open meeting.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given of a virtual meeting of the U.S. Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS®) Advisory Committee (Committee).

DATES: The meeting will be held on Wednesday, August 21, 2019, from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. EST. These times and the agenda topics described below are subject to change. Refer to the web page listed below for the most up-to-date agenda and dial-in information.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held virtually. Refer to the web page listed below for the most up-to-date information.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Krisa Arzayus, Designated Federal Official, U.S. IOOS Advisory Committee, U.S. IOOS Program, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD

20910; Phone 240–533–9455; Fax 301–713–3281; Email krisa.arzayus@noaa.gov or visit the U.S. IOOS Advisory Committee website at <http://ioos.noaa.gov/community/u-s-ioos-advisory-committee/>.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Committee was established by the NOAA Administrator as directed by Section 12304 of the Integrated Coastal and Ocean Observation System Act, part of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (Pub. L. 111–11). The Committee advises the NOAA Administrator and the Interagency Ocean Observation Committee (IOOC) on matters related to the responsibilities and authorities set forth in section 12302 of the Integrated Coastal and Ocean Observation System Act of 2009 and other appropriate matters as the Under Secretary refers to the Committee for review and advice.

The Committee will provide advice on:

(a) Administration, operation, management, and maintenance of the System;

(b) Expansion and periodic modernization and upgrade of technology components of the System;

(c) Identification of end-user communities, their needs for information provided by the System, and the System’s effectiveness in dissemination information to end-user communities and to the general public; and

(d) Any other purpose identified by the Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere or the Interagency Ocean Observation Committee.

The meeting will be open to public participation with a 15-minute public comment period on August 21, 2019, from 2:45 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. (check agenda on website to confirm time.) The Committee expects that public statements presented at its meetings will not be repetitive of previously submitted verbal or written statements. In general, each individual or group making a verbal presentation will be limited to a total time of three (3) minutes. Written comments should be received by the Designated Federal Official by August 16, 2019 to provide sufficient time for Committee review. Written comments received after August 16, 2019 will be distributed to the Committee, but may not be reviewed prior to the meeting date. Please send your name as it appears on driver’s license and the organization/company affiliation you represent to Krisa Arzayus. This information must be received by August 9, 2019.

Matters To Be Considered: The meeting will focus on ongoing committee priorities, and developing the next set of recommendations. The latest version of the agenda will be posted at <http://ioos.noaa.gov/community/u-s-ioos-advisory-committee/>.

Special Accommodations: These meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Krisa Arzayus, Designated Federal Official at 240-533-9455 by August 16, 2019.

Dated: July 10, 2019.

Carl C. Gouldman,

Director, U.S. IOOS Program, National Ocean Service.

[FR Doc. 2019-16773 Filed 8-5-19; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XG910

Takes of Marine Mammals Incidental to Specified Activities; Taking Marine Mammals Incidental to the Sand Island Pile Dike System Test Piles Project Near the Mouth of the Columbia River

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

ACTION: Notice; proposed incidental harassment authorization; request for comments on proposed authorization and possible Renewal.

SUMMARY: NMFS has received a request from U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Portland District (Corps) for authorization to take marine mammals incidental to the Sand Island Pile Dike System Test Piles project near the Mouth of the Columbia River. Pursuant to the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA), NMFS is requesting comments on its proposal to issue an incidental harassment authorization (IHA) to incidentally take marine mammals during the specified activities. NMFS is also requesting comments on a possible one-year Renewal that could be issued under certain circumstances and if all requirements are met, as described in *Request for Public Comments* at the end of this notice. NMFS will consider public comments prior to making any final decision on the issuance of the requested MMPA authorizations and agency responses will be summarized in the final notice of our decision.

DATES: Comments and information must be received no later than September 5, 2019.

ADDRESSES: Comments should be addressed to Jolie Harrison, Chief, Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service. Physical comments should be sent to 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910 and electronic comments should be sent to ITP.Pauline@noaa.gov.

Instructions: NMFS is not responsible for comments sent by any other method, to any other address or individual, or received after the end of the comment period. Comments received electronically, including all attachments, must not exceed a 25-megabyte file size. Attachments to electronic comments will be accepted in Microsoft Word or Excel or Adobe PDF file formats only. All comments received are a part of the public record and will generally be posted online at <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/permit/incidental-take-authorizations-under-marine-mammal-protection-act> without change. All personal identifying information (*e.g.*, name, address) voluntarily submitted by the commenter may be publicly accessible. Do not submit confidential business information or otherwise sensitive or protected information.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Rob Pauline, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, (301) 427-8401. 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/permit/incidental-take-authorizations-under-marine-mammal-protection-act>. In case of problems accessing these documents, please call the contact listed above.

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 issued or, if the taking is limited to harassment, a notice of a proposed incidental take authorization may be provided to the public for review.

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 in shorthand as “mitigation”); and requirements pertaining to the mitigation, monitoring and reporting of such takings are set forth.

The definitions of all applicable MMPA statutory terms cited above are included in the relevant sections below.

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 incidental harassment authorization) with respect to potential impacts on the human environment.

This action is consistent with categories of activities identified in Categorical Exclusion B4 (incidental harassment authorizations with no anticipated serious injury or mortality) of the Companion Manual for NOAA Administrative Order 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 preliminarily determined that the issuance of the proposed IHA qualifies to be categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

We will review all comments submitted in response to this notice prior to concluding our NEPA process or making a final decision on the IHA request.

Summary of Request

On March 6, 2019, NMFS received a request from the Corps for an IHA to take marine mammals incidental to pile driving activities in the Columbia River Estuary. The application was deemed adequate and complete on June 20, 2019. The Corps’ request is for take of a small number of harbor porpoises