

ACTION: Notice of issuance of letter of authorization.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA), as amended, and implementing regulations, notification is hereby given that a Letter of Authorization (LOA) has been issued to the U.S. Navy (Navy) for the take of marine mammals incidental to construction activities at the Ammunition Wharf at Naval Magazine (NAVMAG) Indian Island in Puget Sound, Washington.

DATES: LOA effective from October 1, 2024, until September 30, 2029.

ADDRESSES: The LOA and supporting documentation are available online at: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/action/incidental-take-authorization-taking-marine-mammals-incidental-naval-magazine-indian-island>. In case of problems accessing these documents, please call the contact listed below (see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Robert Pauline, 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).

Summary of Request

On January 29, 2024, we issued a final rule upon request from the Navy for authorization to take marine mammals incidental to construction activities (89 FR 5674). The Navy plans to engage in maintenance and pile replacement construction activities at NAVMAG.

This construction will include use of vibratory pile driving and removal, and impact pile driving. The use of both vibratory and impact pile driving is expected to produce underwater sound at levels that have the potential to result in Levels A and B harassment of marine mammals.

Authorization

We have issued a LOA to Navy authorizing the take of marine mammals incidental to construction activities, as described above. Take of marine mammals will be minimized through the implementation of the following planned mitigation measures: (1) required monitoring of the construction area to detect the presence of marine mammals before beginning construction activities; (2) shutdown of construction activities under certain circumstances to avoid injury of marine mammals; (3) soft start for impact pile driving to allow marine mammals the opportunity to leave the area prior to beginning impact pile driving at full power; and (4) use of bubble curtains to attenuate sound levels when impact driving steel piles. Additionally, the rule includes an adaptive management component that allows for timely modification of mitigation or monitoring measures based on new information, when appropriate. The Navy will submit reports as required.

Based on these findings and the information discussed in the preamble to the final rule, the activities described under this LOA will have a negligible impact on marine mammal stocks and will not have an unmitigable adverse impact on the availability of the affected marine mammal stock for subsistence uses.

Dated: March 4, 2024.

Catherine Marzin,
Deputy Director, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.
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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; National Saltwater Angler Registry and State Exemption Program

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 May 7, 2024.

ADDRESSES: Interested persons are invited to submit written comments to Adrienne Thomas, NOAA PRA Officer, at NOAA.PRA@noaa.gov. Please reference OMB Control Number 0648-0578 in the subject line of your comments. Do not submit Confidential Business Information or otherwise sensitive or protected information.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information or specific questions related to collection activities should be directed to Lauren Dolinger Few, IT Specialist, National Marine Fisheries Service, Office of Science and Technology, 1315 East-West Hwy./FST1, Silver Spring, MD 21910, Phone: (301) 427-8127, lauren.dolinger.few@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract

This request is for the extension of a currently approved collection. The National Saltwater Angler Registry Program and State Exemption Program

(Registry Program) was established to implement recommendations included in the review of national saltwater angling data collection programs conducted by the National Research Council (NRC) in 2005/2006, and the provisions of the Magnuson-Stevens Reauthorization Act, codified at Section 401(g) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA), which require the Secretary of Commerce to commence improvements to recreational fisheries surveys, including establishing a national saltwater angler and for-hire vessel registry, by January 1, 2009. A final rule that includes regulatory measures to implement the Registry Program (RIN 0648-AW10) was adopted and codified in 50 CFR 600, subpart P.

The Registry Program collects identification and contact information from those anglers and for-hire vessels who are involved in recreational fishing in the United States Exclusive Economic Zone or for anadromous fish in any waters, unless the anglers or vessels are exempted from the registration requirement. Data collected includes—for anglers: Name, address, date of birth, telephone contact information and region(s) of the country in which they fish; for for-hire vessels: Owner and operator name, address, date of birth, telephone contact information, email address, vessel name and registration/documentation number and home port or primary operating area. This information is compiled into a national and/or series of regional registries that is being used to support surveys of recreational anglers and for-hire vessels to develop estimates of recreational angling effort.

II. Method of Collection

Persons may register online at a NOAA-maintained website. Registration cards, valid for one year from the date of issuance, are mailed to registrants.

III. Data

OMB Control Number: 0648-0578.

Form Number(s): None.

Type of Review: Extension of current information collection.

Affected Public: Individuals or households; business or other for-profit organizations.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 976.

Estimated Time per Response: 3 minutes.

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 49.

Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public: 1,652.48.

Respondent's Obligation: Mandatory.

Legal Authority: Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) 50 CFR 600, subpart P.

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 ICR. 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,

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

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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; Sea Grant Program Application Requirements for Grants, for Sea Grant Fellowships, Including the Dean John A. Knauss Marine Policy Fellowships, and for Designation as a Sea Grant College or Sea Grant Institution

The Department of Commerce will submit the following information collection request to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for

review and clearance in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, on or after the date of publication of this notice. We invite 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. Public comments were previously requested via the **Federal Register** on December 13, 2023, during a 60-day comment period. This notice allows for an additional 30 days for public comments.

Agency: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

Title: Sea Grant Program Application Requirements for Grants, for Sea Grant Fellowships, including the Dean John A. Knauss Marine Policy Fellowships, and for Designation as a Sea Grant College or Sea Grant Institution.

OMB Control Number: 0648-0362.

Form Number(s): NOAA Forms 90-1, 90-2, and 90-4.

Type of Request: Regular submission [extension of a current information collection].

Number of Respondents: 680.

Average Hours per Response: 30 minutes for a Sea Grant Control form; 20 minutes for a Project Record Form; 15 minutes for a Sea Grant Budget form; and 20 hours for an application for designation as a Sea Grant college or Sea Grant institute.

Total Annual Burden Hours: 1,091.

Needs and Uses: This is a request for extension of an existing information collection.

The objectives of the National Sea Grant College Program, as stated in the Sea Grant legislation (33 U.S.C. 1121 *et seq.*) are to increase the understanding, assessments, development, utilization, and conservation of the Nation's ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes resources. It accomplishes these objectives by conducting research, education, and outreach programs. Grant monies are available for funding activities that help obtain the objectives of the Sea Grant Program. Both single and multi-project grants are awarded, with the latter representing approximately 80 percent of the total grant program. In addition to other standard grant application requirements, three forms are required with the grants. The Sea Grant Control Form (NOAA Form 90-1) is used to identify the organizations and personnel who would be involved in the grant and briefly summarize the proposed activities under the grant. The Project Record Form (NOAA Form 90-2), which collects summary data on projects, helps the National Sea Grant Office (NSGO)