

completed a comprehensive review of the risk assessment and recommended a number of changes and updates to be included in a revised EAFM risk assessment. A draft report has been updated to reflect the approved changes to the risk assessment and incorporates the latest data and scientific information, indicators from the 2024 Mid-Atlantic State of the Ecosystem report, and new analyses developed by Council and the Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC staff. There are some risk element components that require additional feedback and direction from the EOP Committee and AP in order to be finalized. A completed 2024 EAFM risk assessment report will be presented to the Council later in the year.

A detailed agenda and background documents will be made available on the Council's website ([www.mafmc.org](http://www.mafmc.org)) prior to the meeting.

### Special Accommodations

The meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aid should be directed to Shelley Spedden, (302) 526-5251, at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

*Authority:* 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: July 12, 2024.

**Kelly Denit,**

*Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries,  
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; Report of Whaling Operations

**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 September 16, 2024.

**ADDRESSES:** Interested persons are invited to submit written comments to Adrienne Thomas, NOAA PRA Officer, at [NOAA.PRA@noaa.gov](mailto:NOAA.PRA@noaa.gov). Please reference OMB Control Number 0648-0311 in the subject line of your comments. All comments received are part of the public record and will generally be posted on <https://www.regulations.gov> without change. 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 Mi Ae Kim, Fishery Management Specialist, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), Office of International Affairs, Trade, and Commerce, 1315 East-West Hwy, Silver Spring, MD, 20910, 301-427-8365 or [mi.ae.kim@noaa.gov](mailto:mi.ae.kim@noaa.gov).

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### I. Abstract

This request is for extension of a current information collection. Native Americans may conduct certain aboriginal subsistence whaling under the Whaling Convention Act in accordance with the provisions of the International Whaling Commission (IWC). In order to respond to obligations under the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling, the IWC, and the Whaling Convention Act, whaling captains participating in these operations must submit certain information to the relevant Native American whaling organization about strikes on and catch of whales. Anyone retrieving a dead whale is also required to report. Captains must place a distinctive permanent identification mark on any harpoon, lance, or explosive dart used, as well as provide information on the mark and self-identification information. The relevant Native American whaling organization receives the reports, compiles them, and submits the information to the National Marine Fisheries Service, Office of International Affairs, Trade, and Commerce. The information is used to monitor the hunt and to ensure that quotas are not exceeded. The information is also provided to the IWC, which uses it to monitor compliance with its requirements.

##### II. Method of Collection

Reports may be made by phone, fax, email, or in writing. Information on equipment marks must be made in writing.

##### III. Data

*OMB Control Number:* 0648-0311.

*Form Number(s):* None.

*Type of Review:* Regular submission (extension of a current information collection).

*Affected Public:* Individuals or households; State, Local, or Tribal government.

*Estimated Number of Respondents:* 166 (165 whaling captains, one Native American whaling organization).

*Estimated Time per Response:* 30 minutes for reports on whales struck or on recovery of dead whales, including providing the information to the relevant Native American whaling organization; 5 minutes for the relevant Native American whaling organization to type in each report; and 5 hours for the relevant Native American whaling organization to consolidate and submit reports.

*Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours:* 50.

*Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public:* 115.

*Respondent's Obligation:* Mandatory.

*Legal Authority:* Whaling Convention Act (16 U.S.C. 916-9161).

##### 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 request. 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

[RTID 0648-XE042]

#### Takes of Marine Mammals Incidental to Specified Activities; Taking Marine Mammals Incidental to Invenergy Wind Offshore, LLC's Marine Site Characterization Surveys in the New York Bight

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

**ACTION:** Notice; proposed incidental harassment authorization renewal; request for comments on proposed authorization.

**SUMMARY:** NMFS received a request from Invenergy Wind Offshore, LLC (IWO) for the renewal of their currently active incidental harassment authorization (IHA) (hereinafter, the "initial IHA") to take marine mammals incidental to marine site characterization surveys in the New York Bight, specifically within the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) Commercial Lease of Submerged Lands for Renewable Energy Development on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Lease Area OCS-A 0542 (Lease Area) and associated Export Cable Route (ECR) survey area (ECR Area). IWO's specified activities are identical to those included in the initial IHA. The initial IHA expires on July 30, 2024. Pursuant to the Marine Mammal Protection Act, prior to issuing the initial IHA, NMFS requested comments on both the proposed IHA and the potential for renewing the initial authorization if certain requirements were satisfied. The renewal requirements have been satisfied, and NMFS is now providing an additional 15-day comment period to allow for any additional comments on the proposed renewal not previously provided during the initial 30-day comment period.

**DATES:** Comments and information must be received no later than August 1, 2024.

**ADDRESSES:** Comments should be addressed to Jolie Harrison, Chief, Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service, and should be submitted via email to [ITP.demarest@noaa.gov](mailto:ITP.demarest@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, including all attachments, must not exceed a 25-megabyte file size. Attachments to comments will be accepted in Microsoft Word, 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.

Electronic copies of the initial IHA application, renewal request, and supporting documents, including **Federal Register** notices of the initial proposed and final IHA, the initial IHA, and 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-other-energy-activities-renewable>. In case of problems accessing these documents, please call the contact listed below.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Austin Demarest, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, (301) 427-8401.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### Background

The Marine Mammal Protection Act (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). 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 one year for each reauthorization. In the notice of proposed IHA for the initial IHA, 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 of an 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