

- No serious injury or mortality is anticipated or authorized; and no impacts to reproductive success or survival of any individual animals are expected.

- The required mitigation measures are expected to avoid any Level A harassment and to reduce the number and severity of takes by Level B harassment.

- Behavioral impacts and displacement that may occur in response to pile driving, is expected to be limited in duration to approximately 25 days concurrent with in-water construction activity.

- The specified activities do not impact any known important habitat areas such as calving grounds or unique feeding areas, and alternate habitat is readily available.

Based on the analysis contained herein of the likely effects of the specified activity on marine mammals and their habitat, and taking into consideration the implementation of the proposed monitoring and mitigation measures, NMFS preliminarily finds that the total marine mammal take from the proposed pile driving activity will have a negligible impact on BBES bottlenose dolphins.

Small Numbers

As noted previously, only take of small numbers of marine mammals may be authorized under sections 101(a)(5)(A) and (D) of the MMPA for specified activities other than military readiness activities. The MMPA does not define small numbers and so, in practice, where estimated numbers are available, NMFS compares the number of individuals taken to the most appropriate estimation of abundance of the relevant species or stock in our determination of whether an authorization is limited to small numbers of marine mammals. When the predicted number of individuals to be taken is fewer than one-third of the species or stock abundance, the take is considered to be of small numbers. Additionally, other qualitative factors may be considered in the analysis, such as the temporal or spatial scale of the activities.

Based on a conservative estimate of the number of takes that may occur as a result of pile driving activities, less than two percent of the BBES population would be subject to take via Level B harassment.

Based on the analysis contained herein of the proposed activity (including the proposed mitigation and monitoring measures) and the anticipated take of marine mammals, NMFS preliminarily finds that small

numbers of marine mammals would be taken relative to the population size of the affected species or stocks.

Unmitigable Adverse Impact Analysis and Determination

No subsistence uses of BBES bottlenose dolphins are known to occur. Therefore, NMFS has determined that the total taking of affected species or stocks would not have an unmitigable adverse impact on the availability of such species or stocks for taking for subsistence purposes.

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 insure 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.

No incidental take of ESA-listed species is proposed under the auspices of this authorization. Therefore, NMFS has determined that formal consultation under section 7 of the ESA is not required for this action.

Proposed Authorization

As a result of these preliminary determinations, NMFS proposes to issue an IHA to Columbia Gulf, LLC to conduct the specified pile driving activity in Barataria Bay, Louisiana during the 1-year period of authorization, provided the previously mentioned mitigation, monitoring, and reporting requirements are incorporated. A draft of the proposed IHA can be found at: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/permit/incidental-take-authorizations-under-marine-mammal-protection-act>.

Request for Public Comments

We request comment on our analyses, the proposed authorization, and any other aspect of this notice of proposed IHA for the specified activity. We also request comment on the potential renewal of this proposed IHA as described in the paragraph below. Please include with your comments any supporting data or literature citations to help inform decisions on the request for this IHA or a subsequent renewal IHA.

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 Description of Proposed Activity section of this notice is planned or (2) the activities as described in the Description of Proposed Activity section of this notice would not be completed by the time the IHA expires and a renewal would allow for completion of the activities beyond that described in the *Dates and Duration* section of this notice, provided all of the following conditions are met:

- 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 one year from expiration of the initial IHA).

- The request for renewal must include the following:

(1) 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).

(2) 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.

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.

Dated: September 1, 2023.

Kimberly Damon-Randall,

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

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BILLING CODE 3510–22–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648–XD323]

Pacific Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and

Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: The Pacific Fishery Management Council's (Pacific Council) Groundfish Subcommittee of the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) will hold a meeting to review rebuilding analyses for quillback rockfish in California and any remaining 2023 stock assessment review requests from the September 2023 Council meeting. This meeting is open to the public.

DATES: The meeting will be held Monday, September 25, 2023 from 1 p.m. until business for the day has been completed, and will continue through Friday, September 29, 2023, from 8:30 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. (Pacific Daylight Time) or when business for the day has been completed.

ADDRESSES: The SSC Groundfish Subcommittee meeting is tentatively scheduled to be held in person with a web broadcast at the Pacific Fishery Management Council office, Large Conference Room, 7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101, Portland, OR 97220. The meeting may be held online only based on the complexity of the agenda and in the event of Federal travel restrictions. An opportunity for remote public comment will be provided under either meeting format.

Specific meeting information, materials, and instructions for how to connect to the meeting remotely will be provided in the meeting announcement on the Pacific Council's website (see www.pcouncil.org). Please contact Kris Kleinschmidt (kris.kleinschmidt@noaa.gov) or (503) 820-2412 for technical assistance.

Council address: Pacific Fishery Management Council, 7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101, Portland, OR 97220.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Marlene A. Bellman, Staff Officer, Pacific Council; telephone: (503) 820-2414, email: marlene.bellman@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The SSC's Groundfish Subcommittee will review any further analyses for 2023 stock assessments as requested by the Pacific Council at their September 2023 meeting. The SSC's Groundfish Subcommittee will also review new rebuilding analyses for quillback rockfish in California. This process follows the procedures outlined in the Pacific Council's Terms of Reference for the Groundfish Stock Assessment Review Process for 2023-2024 (which can be found at <https://>

www.pcouncil.org/documents/2022/06/terms-of-reference-for-the-groundfish-stock-assessment-review-process-for-2023-2024-june-2022.pdf/). The Groundfish Subcommittee will prepare their recommendations for SSC and Pacific Council consideration at their November 2023 meetings.

Although non-emergency issues not contained in the meeting agendas may be discussed, those issues may not be the subject of formal action during these meetings. Action will be restricted to those issues specifically listed in this document and any issues arising after publication of this document that require emergency action under section 305(c) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, provided the public has been notified of the intent to take final action to address the emergency.

Special Accommodations

Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Kris Kleinschmidt (kris.kleinschmidt@noaa.gov; (503) 820-2412) at least 10 days prior to the meeting date.

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

Dated: September 1, 2023.

Rey Israel Marquez,

Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 2023-19315 Filed 9-6-23; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648-XD106]

Takes of Marine Mammals Incidental to Specified Activities; Taking Marine Mammals Incidental to Pier Maintenance and Bank Stabilization at U.S. Coast Guard Air Station Port Angeles, Port Angeles, Washington

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 the U.S. Coast Guard (Coast Guard or USCG) for authorization to take marine mammals incidental to pier maintenance and bank stabilization construction activities at USCG Air Station Port Angeles, Port Angeles, Washington. 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-time, 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 authorization and agency responses will be summarized in the final notice of our decision.

DATES: Comments and information must be received no later than October 10, 2023.

ADDRESSES: Comments should be addressed to Jolie Harrison, Chief, Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources (OPR), NMFS, and should be submitted via email to ITP.hotchkin@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. All comments received are a part of the public record and will generally be posted online at 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 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: Cara Hotchkin, OPR, 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