

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

[RTID 0648–XD822]

Marine Mammals and Endangered Species; File No. 27830

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

ACTION: Notice; receipt of application.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that Gregory Lewbart, VMD, North Carolina State University, College of Veterinary Medicine, 1060 William Moore Drive, Raleigh, NC 27607, has applied in due form for a permit to import and export marine mammal and protected species parts for scientific research.

DATES: Written, telefaxed, or email comments must be received on or before May 2, 2024.

ADDRESSES: The application and related documents are available for review by selecting “Records Open for Public Comment” from the “Features” box on the Applications and Permits for Protected Species (APPS) home page, <https://apps.nmfs.noaa.gov>, and then selecting File No. 27830 from the list of available applications. These documents are also available 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. 27830 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: Malcolm Mohead or Jennifer Skidmore, (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.*), the regulations governing the taking, importing, and exporting of endangered and threatened species (50 CFR parts 222–226), and the Fur Seal Act of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1151 *et seq.*).

The applicant proposes to import parts of Galápagos sea lions (*Zalophus*

wollebaeki) and Galápagos fur seals (*Arctocephalus galapagoensis*) collected in Ecuador to the North Carolina State University, College of Veterinarian Medicine or ZooQuatic Labs, Baltimore, Maryland. Samples will be obtained from live animals during health assessments or from dead salvaged animals, including those impacted by boats or fishing equipment. In addition, samples may be exported for additional analyses. The objective of the research is to assess each population’s health by analyzing samples collected from up to 50 live and 100 dead animals of each species, annually. The permit would be valid for 5 years from the date of issuance.

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: March 27, 2024.

Julia Marie Harrison,
Chief, Permits and Conservation Division,
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; West Coast Region, Gear Identification Requirements**

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 June 3, 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 0648–0352 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 Christopher Biegel, Fishery Management Specialist, National Marine Fisheries Service, West Coast Regional Office, 1201 NE Lloyd Blvd., Suite 1100, Portland, OR 97232, (503) 231–6291, christopher.biegel@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**I. Abstract**

This request is for an extension of a currently approved information collection. The success of fisheries management programs depends significantly on regulatory compliance. The requirements that fishing gear be marked are essential to facilitate enforcement. The ability to link fishing gear to the vessel owner or operator is crucial to enforcement of regulations issued under the authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. The marking of fishing gear is also valuable in actions concerning damage, loss, and civil proceedings. The regulations specify that fishing gear must be marked with the vessel’s official number, Federal permit or tag number, or some other specified form of identification. The regulations further specify how the gear is to be marked (*e.g.*, location and color).

Law enforcement personnel rely on gear marking information to assure compliance with fisheries management regulations. Gear that is not properly identified is confiscated. Gear violations are more readily prosecuted when the gear is marked, and this allows for more cost-effective enforcement. Gear marking helps ensure that a vessel harvests fish only from its own traps/pots/other gear and that fishing gear are not illegally placed. Cooperating fishermen also use the gear marking numbers to report suspicious or non-compliant activities that they observe, and to report placement or occurrence of gear in unauthorized areas. The