

DATES: The modified LOA is valid through November 19, 2028.

ADDRESSES: The issued modified LOA may be obtained online at <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/action/incidental-take-authorization-revolution-wind-llc-construction-revolution-wind-energy>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Carter Esch, Office of Protected Resources, 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 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, regulations are promulgated (when applicable), and public notice and an opportunity for public comment are provided.

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). If such findings are made, 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 as “mitigation”); and requirements pertaining to the monitoring and reporting of such takings.

NMFS promulgated a final rule in the **Federal Register** on October 20, 2023 (88 FR 72562), which governs the incidental take of marine mammals incidental to Revolution Wind’s construction of the Project in Federal and State waters offshore Rhode Island, 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-0486 and along two export cable routes to sea-to-shore transition points. The rule became effective on November 20, 2023, and is valid through November 19, 2028. The

regulations allow NMFS to approve requests for modification to the LOA’s specified activity or the mitigation, monitoring, or reporting measures if NMFS determines the requested change does not change the findings made for promulgation of the regulations and does not result in more than a minor change in the total estimated number of takes (see 50 CFR 217.277(b)).

NMFS issued a LOA to Revolution Wind on November 20, 2023, and published a notice of issuance in the **Federal Register** on November 27, 2023 (88 FR 82834). The LOA authorized Revolution Wind to take, by harassment, marine mammals incidental to specified construction activities, specifically impact pile driving of wind turbine generator and offshore substation monopile foundations, UXO/MEC detonations, vibratory pile driving of cofferdams and goal posts, pneumatic hammering of casing pipes, and high-resolution geophysical vessel-based site characterization surveys, within the specified geographical region.

Summary of Request and Analysis

On March 7, 2024, NMFS received a request from Revolution Wind to remove the “per acoustic data stream” requirement from LOA measure 4(c)(2) (“Concurrently, at least one PAM operator per acoustic data stream (equivalent to the number of acoustic buoys) must be actively monitoring for marine mammals. . .”). Revolution Wind requested other LOA modifications in their March letter; however, NMFS is not making these modifications at this time because solutions to the challenges have been identified. In support of its acoustic data stream request, Revolution Wind cited challenges that had not adequately been considered prior to promulgation of the regulations. Specifically, Revolution Wind cited limited vessel space, the financial burden of employing multiple PAM operators, and the limited pool of qualified candidates as concerns associated with the need to maintain a rotation of four on-duty PAM operators. The regulations and LOA allow for PAM operators to monitor from a shoreside location; however, the PAM system Revolution Wind is using is configured such that PAM operators must be located on the foundation installation vessel. Moreover, Revolution Wind highlighted that some functionalities of the PAM software planned for use (*e.g.*, the ability to localize on the position of an acoustic detection) are optimized when a single PAM operator evaluates the software data products for all acoustic buoy data streams rather than having multiple PAM operators view

separate data streams. NMFS’ evaluation indicated that the requested modification would alleviate concerns that were not fully considered by Revolution Wind previously while also allowing for potential improvement in localization efficacy. NMFS expects PAM operators to acoustically detect marine mammals within the applicable zones with the same level of efficacy and in accordance with a NMFS-approved PAM Plan. Furthermore, NMFS did not incorporate mitigation and monitoring measures, other than 10-decibel sound attenuation and seasonal restrictions, into the estimated take analysis. Therefore, NMFS has determined that the requested modification of measure 4(c)(2) does not change the findings made for the regulations and does not result in changes in the total estimated take numbers.

NMFS has removed the language requiring that each acoustic data stream must be monitored by a separate PAM operator from the modified LOA. The modified LOA specifies that at least one on-duty PAM operator must monitor acoustic data streams prior to, during, and following foundation installations.

Authorization

NMFS has issued a modified LOA to Revolution Wind authorizing the take, by harassment, of small numbers of marine mammals incidental to specified construction activities associated with the Project, which includes the modified monitoring measure discussed herein.

Dated: May 6, 2024.

Kimberly Damon-Randall,

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

[FR Doc. 2024-10419 Filed 5-10-24; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Approval of a Boundary Expansion for the South Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve

AGENCY: Office for Coastal Management, National Ocean Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Department of Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of approval; notice of availability.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Coastal Zone Management Act and its implementing regulations, notice is

hereby given that NOAA's Office for Coastal Management approves a boundary expansion for the South Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve in Charleston, Oregon to add 1,771 acres, which consist of 30 acres added as a correction to account for changes in GIS-mapping technologies since the reserve was established in 1974; 1,541 acres of parcels currently owned by the Oregon Division of State Lands outside the existing boundary; and 200 acres of state-owned South Slough waters located adjacent to the expansion parcels, resulting in a new total area for the reserve of 6,542 acres. Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act, NOAA prepared a draft environmental assessment (draft EA) to analyze the effects of the requested expansion and solicited public comment on the draft EA. NOAA determined that the boundary expansion would not have significant environmental effects. Therefore, after considering the comments it received, NOAA issued a final environmental assessment and finding of no significant impact (FONSI).

ADDRESSES: The final environmental assessment and FONSI can be downloaded or viewed at coast.noaa.gov/czm/compliance/. The documents are also available by sending a written request to the point of contact identified below (see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Erica Seiden of NOAA's Office for Coastal Management, by email at Erica.Seiden@noaa.gov, phone at (240) 429-5166, or mail at 1305 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, 20910.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1451 *et seq.*; 42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*; 15 CFR 921.33.

Keelin S. Kuipers,

Deputy Director, Office for Coastal Management, National Ocean Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

[FR Doc. 2024-10321 Filed 5-10-24; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648-XD949]

New England Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice of a public meeting.

SUMMARY: The New England Fishery Management Council (Council) is scheduling a public meeting via webinar of its Habitat Advisory Panel to consider actions affecting New England fisheries in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ). This meeting will be held in-person with a webinar option. Recommendations from this group will be brought to the full Council for formal consideration and action, if appropriate.

DATES: This webinar will be held on Tuesday, May 28, 2024, at 9 a.m.

ADDRESSES: This meeting will be held via webinar. Webinar registration URL information: <https://nefmc-org.zoom.us/j/96szYknT2aHcWje6x06bA>.

Council address: New England Fishery Management Council, 50 Water Street, Mill 2, Newburyport, MA 01950.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Cate O'Keefe, Ph.D., Executive Director, New England Fishery Management Council; telephone: (978) 465-0492.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Agenda

The Advisory Panel will review and discuss draft alternatives for the Northern Edge Habitat-Scallop Framework and recommend modifications to the draft alternatives and rationale to the Habitat Committee. They will also receive updates on the Council's Essential Fish Habitat Review. Also, they plan to review and discuss potential Council comments to the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management on the Proposed Sale Notice for offshore wind leases in the Gulf of Maine. Other business will be discussed, if necessary.

Although non-emergency issues not contained on the agenda may come before this Council for discussion, those issues may not be the subject of formal action during this meeting. Council action will be restricted to those issues specifically listed in this notice and any issues arising after publication of this notice that require emergency action under section 305(c) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, provided the public has been notified of the Council's intent to take final action to address the emergency. The public also should be aware that the meeting will be recorded. Consistent with 16 U.S.C. 1852, a copy of the recording is available upon request.

Special Accommodations

This meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Cate O'Keefe, Ph.D., Executive Director, at

(978) 465-0492, at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

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

Dated: May 8, 2024.

Rey Israel Marquez,

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

[FR Doc. 2024-10393 Filed 5-10-24; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648-XD787]

Taking and Importing Marine Mammals; Taking Marine Mammals Incidental to Geophysical Surveys Related to Oil and Gas Activities in the Gulf of Mexico

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

ACTION: Notice of modification to expiration date of letter of authorization.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA), as amended, its implementing regulations, and NMFS' MMPA Regulations for Taking Marine Mammals Incidental to Geophysical Surveys Related to Oil and Gas Activities in the Gulf of Mexico (GOM), notification is hereby given that NMFS has modified the expiration date of a Letter of Authorization (LOA) issued to Anadarko Petroleum Corporation (Anadarko) for the take of marine mammals incidental to geophysical survey activity in the GOM.

DATES: This LOA is effective through July 15, 2024.

ADDRESSES: The LOA, LOA request, and supporting documentation are available online at: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/marine-mammal-protection/issued-letters-authorization-oil-and-gas-industry-geophysical-survey>. In case of problems accessing these documents, please call the contact listed below (**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Rachel Wachtendonk, 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