

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

[RTID 0648-XE303]

**Marine Mammals; File No. 27543**

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

**ACTION:** Notice; receipt of application.

**SUMMARY:** Notice is hereby given that Marine Ecology and Telemetry Research, 2468 Camp McKenzie Trl NW, Seabeck WA 98380 (Responsible Party: Greg Schorr), has applied in due form for a permit to conduct research on and import specimens of 47 marine mammal species including the following endangered species and Distinct Population Segments (DPSs): blue whale (*Balaenoptera musculus*), bowhead whale (*Balaena mysticetus*), Main Hawaiian Islands Insular DPS of false killer whale (*Pseudorca crassidens*), fin whale (*Balaenoptera physalus*), Western DPS of gray whale (*Eschrichtius robustus*), Western North Pacific DPS and Central America DPS of humpback whale (*Megaptera novaeangliae*), Southern Resident DPS of killer whale (*Orcinus orca*), North Pacific right whale (*Eubalaena japonica*), sei whale (*Balaenoptera borealis*), and sperm whale (*Physeter macrocephalus*).

**DATES:** Written comments must be received on or before October 21, 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 home page, <https://apps.nmfs.noaa.gov>, and then selecting File No. 27543 from the list of available applications. These documents are also available upon written request via email to [NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov](mailto:NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov).

Written comments on this application should be submitted via email to [NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov](mailto:NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov). Please include File No. 27543 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](mailto: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:** Amy Hapeman or Sara Young, (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 assess the biology and ecology of cetaceans in U.S. and international waters along the U.S. west coast south to the Baja California Peninsula, Hawaii and Alaska. The main research objectives are to investigate cetacean (1) distribution, abundance, stock structure, habitat use and demographics, (2) behavioral ecology, (3) population health and exposure to potential stressors, and (4) behavioral responses to military sound sources. Research would be conducted from vessel and aerial platforms (manned and unmanned aircraft systems), for: counts, sample collection (prey remains, fecal, sloughed skin, skin and blubber biopsy, breath), observations, acoustic recordings, acoustic playbacks, photo-identification, videography, photogrammetry, tagging, and tracking. Researchers may attach up to two tag types (suction-cup, dart/barb, or deep implant) at a time to some animals. Researchers may unintentionally disturb seven pinniped species, including the endangered Western DPS of Steller sea lion (*Eumetopias jubatus*) and Hawaiian monk seals (*Neomonachus schauinslandi*), during studies. Biological samples collected in international waters may be imported and re-exported. See the application for take numbers requested. The permit would be valid for 5 years.

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: September 17, 2024.

**Julia M. Harrison,**

*Chief, Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.*

[FR Doc. 2024-21524 Filed 9-19-24; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3510-22-P**

**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; Deep Seabed Mining Exploration Licenses**

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 May 14, 2024 during a 60-day comment period. This notice allows for an additional 30 days for public comments.

*Agency:* National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Commerce

*Title:* Deep Seabed Mining Exploration Licenses.

*OMB Control Number:* 0648-0145.

*Form Number(s):* None.

*Type of Request:* Regular submission (extension of a currently approved collection).

*Number of Respondents:* 1.

*Average Hours per Response:* Annual report: 20 hours. For those years in which an extension request must be made, the estimated total annual burden is 270 hours.

*Total Annual Burden Hours:* With there being only one license holder/respondent, the estimated total annual burden is 20 hours for the preparation of the annual report. In those years when a license extension request must be made, the estimated total burden for the license holder is 270 hours.

*Needs and Uses:* This request is for the extension of the currently approved information collection. No changes have been made to the collection requirements. NOAA's regulations at 15 CFR 970 govern the issuing and

monitoring of exploration licenses under the Deep Seabed Hard Mineral Resources Act. The NOAA Office for Coastal Management is responsible for approving and administering licenses. Any persons seeking a license must submit certain information that allows NOAA to ensure the applicant meets the standards of the Act. Licensees are required to conduct monitoring and make reports, and they may request revisions, transfers, or extensions of licenses. Information required for the issuance and extension of licenses is provided to fulfill statutory requirements to ensure that license applicants have identified areas of interest for deep seabed hard mineral exploration and production; developed plans for those activities; have the financial resources available to conduct proposed activity; and have considered the effects of the activity on the natural and human environment. This information is used to determine whether licenses should be granted or extended.

Exploration licenses and commercial recovery permits under the Deep Seabed Hard Mineral Resources Act are only for activities by U.S. citizens in international waters. No license or permit applications have been received since the early 1980s, and none are expected during this collection period. U.S. deep seabed exploration licenses and commercial recovery permits are not recognized by the International Seabed Authority, which may raise security of tenure concerns internationally due to the lack of U.S. accession to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea Treaty. Two exploration licenses issued in the early 1980s are held by Lockheed Martin Corporation. The licenses are subject to annual reporting requirements and extension requests every five years. No at-sea exploration is authorized under the licenses without further authorization from NOAA. Such activities are not expected during the reporting period for the same reason as above.

*Affected Public:* Large businesses.

*Frequency:* Report on activities pursuant to the exploration licenses due annually. Extension requests must be submitted every five years.

*Respondent's Obligation:* Required to maintain licenses.

*Legal Authority:* Deep Seabed Hard Mineral Resources Act (DSHMRA) (30 U.S.C. 1401–1473); 15 CFR part 970.

This information collection request may be viewed at [www.reginfo.gov](http://www.reginfo.gov). Follow the instructions to view the Department of Commerce collections currently under review by OMB.

Written comments and recommendations for the proposed information collection should be submitted within 30 days of the publication of this notice on the following website [www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain](http://www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain). Find this particular information collection by selecting “Currently under 30-day Review—Open for Public Comments” or by using the search function and entering either the title of the collection or the OMB Control Number 0648–0145.

**Sheleen Dumas,**

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

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**BILLING CODE 3510–08–P**

## 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; Survey to Collect Economic Data from Recreational Anglers along the Atlantic Coast

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 March 21, 2022 during a 60-day comment period. This notice allows for an additional 30 days for public comments.

*Agency:* National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Commerce.

*Title:* Survey to Collect Economic Data from Recreational Anglers along the Atlantic Coast.

*OMB Control Number:* 0648–0783.

*Form Number(s):* None.

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

*Number of Respondents:* 957.

*Average Hours per Response:* 8 minutes to complete NARFS III and 12 minutes to complete NARFS IV.

*Total Annual Burden Hours:* 157 hours.

*Needs and Uses:* This request is for a revision and extension to a currently approved information collection. The first data collection effort in 2019 under OMB Control Number 0648–0783 was to assess how changes in saltwater recreational fishing regulations affect angler effort, angler welfare, fishing mortality, and future stock levels. That data collection effort focused on anglers who fished for Atlantic cod and haddock off the Atlantic coast from Maine to Massachusetts (North Atlantic Recreational Fishing Survey I). In 2020, the collection was revised to remove the cod and haddock survey and add a survey focused on anglers who fish for summer flounder, black sea bass, and scup along the Atlantic coast from Massachusetts to North Carolina (North Atlantic Recreational Fishing Survey II). In 2022, the collection was revised again to re-add the original cod and haddock survey back to this control number (North Atlantic Recreational Fishing Survey III). This revision will re-add the survey focused on summer flounder, black sea bass, and scup (North Atlantic Recreational Fishing Survey IV) that was inadvertently removed in the last revision.

The objective of these surveys will remain exactly the same as the previous surveys conducted under this control number. That is, to statistically assess how anglers respond to changes in management options and fishing regulations (e.g., bag limits, size limits, dates of open seasons, etc.). The survey data will provide the information fisheries managers need to conduct updated analysis of the socio-economic effects to recreational anglers and to coastal communities of proposed changes in fishing regulations. The recreational fishing community and regional fisheries management councils now rely on species-specific socio-economic studies of recreational fishing for analyses of fisheries policies. These surveys will address the stated need for more species-specific studies.

*Affected Public:* Individuals or households.

*Frequency:* On Occasion.

*Respondent's Obligation:* Voluntary.

*Legal Authority:* 16 U.S.C. 1801

Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.

This information collection request may be viewed at [www.reginfo.gov](http://www.reginfo.gov). Follow the instructions to view the Department of Commerce collections currently under review by OMB.

Written comments and recommendations for the proposed information collection should be