

will have a negligible impact on the species or stock(s), will not have an unmitigable adverse impact on the availability of the species or stock(s) for subsistence uses (where relevant), and if the permissible methods of taking and requirements pertaining to the mitigation, monitoring and reporting of such takings are set forth.

NMFS has defined “negligible impact” in 50 CFR 216.103 as an impact resulting from the specified activity that cannot be reasonably expected to, and is not reasonably likely to, adversely affect the species or stock through effects on annual rates of recruitment or survival.

The MMPA states that the term “take” means to harass, hunt, capture, kill or attempt to harass, hunt, capture, or kill any marine mammal.

Except with respect to certain activities not pertinent here, the MMPA defines “harassment” as: any act of pursuit, torment, or annoyance, which (i) has the potential to injure a marine mammal or marine mammal stock in the wild (Level A harassment); or (ii) has the potential to disturb a marine mammal or marine mammal stock in the wild by causing disruption of behavioral patterns, including, but not limited to, migration, breathing, nursing, breeding, feeding, or sheltering (Level B harassment).

Summary of Request

On May 24, 2024, NMFS received an application from Vineyard Northeast requesting authorization to take marine mammals incidental to the development of the Project in the BOEM Lease Area OCS-A-0522 off of MA and CT. In response to our comments, and following an extensive information exchange with NMFS, Vineyard Northeast submitted a final revised application on November 18, 2024, which we deemed adequate and complete on November 18, 2024. Vineyard Northeast requests the regulations and subsequent Letter of Authorization (LOA) be valid for 5 years, beginning on January 1, 2028.

Vineyard Northeast has proposed to construct the Project (comprised of two sub-projects: Project 1 and Project 2) using impact and vibratory pile driving of wind turbine generators (WTG) foundations, impact pile driving of electrical service platform (ESP) foundations and a booster station, vibratory installation and removal of cofferdams at cable landfall sites, detonation of unexploded ordinances (UXOs), site characterization surveys, seabed preparation and scour protection application, and inter-array and export cable trenching, laying, and burial. Vessels would be used to transport

crew, supplies, and materials to the project area to support construction. Vineyard Northeast has determined that a subset of these activities (*i.e.*, installing piles using impact and vibratory pile driving, vibratory installation and removal of cofferdams, site characterization surveys, and potential UXO detonation) may result in the take, by Level A harassment and/or Level B harassment, of marine mammals. Therefore, Vineyard Northeast requests authorization to incidentally take marine mammals. Take by mortality or serious injury of any marine mammal or take by Level A harassment of North Atlantic right whales is not requested.

Specified Activities

Vineyard Northeast proposes to develop, construct, and operate an offshore wind energy facility in the BOEM Lease Area OCS-A-0522 along with associated offshore and onshore transmission systems. The purpose of this facility would be to generate renewable electricity to meet the demand expressed by northeastern states and other users in order to achieve renewable energy and carbon emission reduction goals. The Lease Area is located within the southeastern portion of the MA Wind Energy Area and is approximately 46 kilometers (29 miles) from Nantucket. Offshore export cable corridors (OECC) would connect the Lease Area to landfall sites in MA and CT. Vineyard Northeast has divided the Lease Area into Project 1 (northeastern portion) and Project 2 (southwestern portion), as well as proposed two potential construction schedules consisting of a 2-year (Schedule A: 2030–2031) or 4-year (Schedule B: 2029–2032) timeline. The Project would consist of up to 160 wind turbine generator and electrical service platform positions within the Lease Area, and up to 4 offshore export cable bundles with 2 cable bundles making landfall in MA and 2 cable bundles making landfall in CT. If high voltage alternating current (HVAC) cables are used, Vineyard Northeast may install a booster station along the MA OECC in the northwestern portion of Lease Area OCS-A-0534 to increase efficiency of electrical transmission.

Vineyard Northeast anticipates the following activities may potentially result in the harassment of marine mammals during the effective period of the requested regulations and associated LOA:

- Installing up to 159 WTG monopile and/or piled jacket foundations with a maximum diameter of 14 meters (m) using a 6,600 or 8,000 kilojoules (kJ)

impact hammer, vibratory hammer, and potential drilling;

- Installing up to three ESP foundations and one booster station foundation using piled jacket foundations comprised of 4.25 m pin piles driven with a 3,500 kJ impact hammer;
- Installing and removing up to 5 cofferdams comprised of sheet piles using a vibratory hammer;
- Using HRG equipment to survey the Lease Area over 64 days; and
- Potential detonation of up to 10 UXOs.

Information Solicited

Interested persons may submit information, suggestions, and comments concerning Vineyard Northeast’s request (see **ADDRESSES**). NMFS will consider all information, suggestions, and comments related to the request during the development of proposed regulations governing the incidental taking of marine mammals by Vineyard Northeast, if appropriate.

Dated: December 11, 2024.

Kimberly Damon-Randall,

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

[FR Doc. 2024–29574 Filed 12–16–24; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Notice To Solicit Nominations for Membership on the National Sea Grant Advisory Board (NSGAB)

AGENCY: Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Commerce (DOC).

ACTION: Notice to solicit nominations for membership on the National Sea Grant Advisory Board (NSGAB). <https://seagrant.noaa.gov/About/Advisory-Board>.

SUMMARY: The National Sea Grant Advisory Board (NSGAB) advises the National Sea Grant College Program (Sea Grant) in the areas of program evaluation, strategic planning, education and extension and science and technology programs. For more information on this Federal Advisory Committee please visit the Federal Advisory Committee database: <https://www.facadatabase.gov/FACA/FACAPublicPage>. This notice also responds to the Sea Grant Program Improvement Act of 1976, which

requires the Secretary of Commerce to solicit nominations at least once a year for membership on the NSGAB. To apply for membership to the Board, applicants should submit a current resume. A cover letter highlighting specific areas of expertise relevant to the purpose of the Board is helpful, but not required. Nominations will be accepted by Email at oar.sg-feedback@noaa.gov. While nominations are always accepted, to be considered for current openings, please submit your nomination no later than January 31, 2025. NOAA is an equal opportunity employer.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Board, which consists of a balanced representation from academia, industry, state government and citizens groups, was established in 1976 by Section 209 of the Sea Grant Improvement Act (Pub. L. 94-461, 33 U.S.C. 1128). The Board advises the Secretary of Commerce and the Director of the National Sea Grant College Program with respect to operations under the Act, and such other matters as the Secretary refers to them for review and advice.

Privacy Act Statement

Authority. The collection of information concerning nominations to the NSGAB FAC is authorized under the FACA, as amended, 5 U.S.C. App. and its implementing regulations, 41 CFR part 102-3, and in accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974, as amended, (Privacy Act) 5 U.S.C. 552a. *Purpose.* The collection of names, contact information, resumes, professional information, and qualifications is required in order for the Under Secretary to appoint members to the NSGAB FAC. *Routine Uses.* NOAA will use the nomination information for the purpose set forth above. The Privacy Act of 1974 authorizes disclosure of the information collected to NOAA staff for work-related purposes and for other purposes only as set forth in the Privacy Act and for routine uses published in the Privacy Act System of Records Notice COMMERCE/DEPT-11, Candidates for Membership, Members, and Former Members of Department of Commerce Advisory Committees, available at <https://www.osec.doc.gov/opog/PrivacyAct/SORNs/dept-11.html>, and the System of Records Notice COMMERCE/DEPT-18, Employees Personnel Files Not Covered by Notices of Other Agencies, available at <https://www.osec.doc.gov/opog/PrivacyAct/SORNs/DEPT-18.html>. *Disclosure.* Furnishing the nomination information is voluntary; however, if the information is not provided, the individual would

not be considered for appointment as a member of the NSGAB FAC.

David Holst,

Chief Financial Officer/Administrative Officer, Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648-XE511]

Marine Mammals; File No. 28286

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

ACTION: Notice; receipt of application.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that SeaWorld LLC, 6240 Sea Harbor Drive, Orlando, FL 32821 (Responsible Party: Chris Dold, DVM), has applied in due form for a permit to conduct research and enhancement activities on one stranded, non-releasable beluga whale (*Delphinapterus leucas*) from the endangered Cook Inlet distinct population segment (DPS).

DATES: Written comments must be received on or before January 31, 2025.

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. 28286 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. 28286 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:

Courtney Smith, Ph.D., 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.*), and the regulations governing the taking, importing, and exporting of endangered and threatened species (50 CFR parts 222 through 226).

The applicant proposes to conduct research on and provide long-term care for one male beluga whale (NOA0010477/"Tyonek") from the depleted and endangered Cook Inlet DPS. This whale stranded as a neonate (estimated date of birth: September 1, 2017), and was rescued and rehabilitated by the Alaska marine mammal stranding network under the authority of the NMFS Marine Mammal Health and Stranding Response Program. NMFS determined him to be non-releasable and placed Tyonek with SeaWorld of Texas where he has been maintained for research and enhancement purposes since March 18, 2018.

Proposed research activities for this beluga whale include behavioral observations, underwater photography/videography, and active acoustic sonar imaging. The proposed enhancement activities include continued daily husbandry care (feeding, training, monitoring growth [measurements, weight, ultrasound]); veterinary care (exams and biological sampling including but not limited to blood, breath exhalate, oral swabs, skin scrapes, gastric fluids, urine, feces; and treatments as warranted); reproductive health assessment (testicular ultrasound); behavioral observations; and enrichment.

Tyonek would be placed on public display incidental to the proposed research and enhancement activities but would not be used in interactive programs with the public or trained for performance. Tyonek would be included in public educational presentations would address the endangered status and current threats to the Cook Inlet DPS and may include demonstrations of trained husbandry and enrichment behaviors as well as natural behaviors. Tyonek may be transported to another SeaWorld facility in consultation with NMFS, if deemed necessary for socialization or husbandry purposes. The permit is requested for a 5-year period.

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.