

voluntary; however, if the information is not provided, the individual will not be considered for appointment as a member of a sanctuary advisory council.

*Consent.* By submitting an application to ONMS for appointment to a sanctuary advisory council, you are consenting to the use and disclosure of the information for the purposes and routine uses described above. However, if you prefer that your application be reviewed by NOAA employees only and not disclosed to current council members as part of the evaluation process, please contact the sanctuary advisory council coordinator to request internal review only, which will not result in any disadvantage or impact regarding your candidacy, or for any questions regarding this Privacy Act Statement.

### Paperwork Reduction Act

ONMS has a valid Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number (0648–0397) for the collection of public information related to the processing of ONMS national marine sanctuary advisory council applications across the National Marine Sanctuary System. Establishing a sanctuary advisory council for CHNMS fits within the estimated reporting burden under that control number. See <https://www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRASearch> (Enter Control Number 0648–0397). Therefore, ONMS will not request an update to the reporting burden certified for OMB control number 0648–0397.

Send comments regarding this burden estimate, or any other aspect of this data collection, including suggestions for reducing the burden, to: Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, 1305 East West Highway, N/NMS, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910.

Notwithstanding any other provisions of the law, no person is required to respond to, nor shall any person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with a collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act, 44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*, unless that collection of information displays a currently valid OMB control number. The OMB control number is #0648–0397.

*Authority:* 16 U.S.C. 1431 *et seq.*

### John Armor,

Director, Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, National Ocean Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648–XE519]

### Magnuson-Stevens Act Provisions; Fisheries Off West Coast States; Pacific Highly Migratory Species; Opening of Tier 9 Application Period

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

**ACTION:** Notice; permit application period opening.

**SUMMARY:** NMFS announces the opening of the permit application period for initial issuance of limited entry deep-set buoy gear permits under qualification tier 9. Authorized through implementation of Amendment 6 to the Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for U.S. West Coast Fisheries for Highly Migratory Species (HMS) and its implementing regulations, tier 9 was established as the final tier in a ranking system for issuance of limited entry deep-set buoy gear permits. Tier 9 permits for deep-set buoy gear will be available through the National Permits System.

**DATES:** The application period for initial issuance of deep-set buoy gear permits issued under tier 9 is February 1 through March 31, 2025.

**ADDRESSES:** This notice is accessible via the internet at the Office of the Federal Register website at <https://www.federalregister.gov>. Background information on Amendment 6 to the HMS FMP and supporting documents are available at the NOAA Fisheries West Coast Region website at <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/region/west-coast>.

### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Karen Palmigiano, [karen.palmigiano@noaa.gov](mailto:karen.palmigiano@noaa.gov) or 206–526–4491.

### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

#### Background

The FMP for U.S. West Coast Fisheries for HMS and its implementing regulations at title 50 in the Code of Federal Regulations, part 660, subpart K, regulate commercial and recreational fishing for HMS in the U.S. exclusive economic zone off the coasts of Washington, Oregon, and California and in adjacent high seas waters. NMFS published Amendment 6 and its implementing regulations on May 8, 2023 (88 FR 29545). Amendment 6 authorizes deep-set buoy gear (DSBG) as an additional gear type for catching

swordfish and other HMS in Federal waters off of California and Oregon. The Pacific Fishery Management Council recommended that NOAA Fisheries authorize DSBG as an additional commercial gear type to improve the economic viability of the West Coast-based swordfish fishery while minimizing bycatch to the extent practicable. The regulations also established a limited entry (LE) regime for “phased-in” permitting of DSBG fishing within Federal waters of the Southern California Bight (see 50 CFR 660.707(g)). Tier 9 is the final phase of that LE permit regime.

### Tier 9 Permits

As required by the regulations at § 660.707(g)(12), once the list of initial approved qualifiers for tiers 1 through 8 is exhausted, NMFS may begin accepting applications under tier 9. Additionally, as required by regulations, NMFS must announce the opening of tier 9 in the **Federal Register**. This notice serves as that announcement.

Therefore, beginning on February 1, 2025, and ending on March 31, 2025, NMFS will accept applications for initial issuance of LE DSBG permits under tier 9. NMFS will continue to accept applications for tier 9 permits on an annual basis and issue up to 25 permits per year until a total of 300 LE DSBG permits are issued, unless NMFS determines that the maximum number of permits should be fewer than 300 and publishes a subsequent rulemaking. The process for initial issuance of LE DSBG permits to applicant that qualify under tier 9, which can be found at § 660.707(g)(12), is summarized below.

To qualify for a LE DSBG permit under tier 9, an applicant must be a “person” as defined at § 660.702 and must not already own a LE DSBG permit either individually or as a shareholder in a business which owns a LE DSBG permit.

To apply for a LE DSBG permit under tier 9 in 2025, a person must submit a complete application to NMFS through the National Permits System website no later than 11:59 p.m. Pacific daylight time on March 31, 2025. A complete initial issuance application package consists of the following: a completed initial issuance application form, which may include ownership interest for businesses, and as required under § 660.707(g)(3)(ii); a current copy of the U.S. Coast Guard Documentation Form or State registration form for the vessel that will be registered to the permit; and payment of required fees. NMFS may require additional documentation as it deems necessary to make a determination on the application. The

initial issuance application package will be considered incomplete until the required information is submitted. NMFS will decline to act on an incomplete application.

NMFS will issue LE DSBG permits to approved applicants under tier 9 on a first come, first served basis, according to the date and time that their application was submitted through the National Permits System. NMFS will issue up to 25 permits each year. If NMFS approves more than 25 applications in a single year, the approved applicants above 25 (who were not issued a permit) will receive priority for permit issuance the following year, according to the date and time that their complete applications were received.

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

Dated: December 17, 2024.

**Kelly Denit,**

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

[FR Doc. 2024-30443 Filed 1-6-25; 8:45 am]

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**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

[RTID 0648-XE481]

**Takes of Marine Mammals Incidental to Specified Activities; Taking Marine Mammals Incidental to the City of Hoonah's Cargo Dock Project, Hoonah, Alaska**

**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 City of Hoonah (Hoonah) for authorization to take marine mammals incidental to pile driving and removal activities associated with the Hoonah Cargo Dock project in Hoonah, Alaska. 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, 1-year renewal that could be issued under certain circumstances and if all requirements are met. 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 February 6, 2025.

**ADDRESSES:** Comments should be addressed to Jolie Harrison, Chief, Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service and should be submitted via email to [ITP.wachtendonk@noaa.gov](mailto:ITP.wachtendonk@noaa.gov). 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.

**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 <https://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.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Rachel Wachtendonk, 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 small numbers 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 and either regulations are proposed or, if the taking is limited to harassment, a notice of a proposed IHA is provided to the public for review.

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). Further, 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 the species or stocks for taking for certain subsistence uses (referred to in shorthand as “mitigation”); and requirements pertaining to the monitoring and reporting of the takings. The definitions of all applicable MMPA statutory terms used above are included in the relevant sections below and can be found in section 3 of the MMPA (16 U.S.C. 1362) and NMFS regulations at 50 CFR 216.103.

**National Environmental Policy Act**

To comply with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA; 42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*) and NOAA Administrative Order (NAO) 216-6A, NMFS must review our proposed action (*i.e.*, the issuance of an IHA) with respect to potential impacts on the human environment.

This action is consistent with categories of activities identified in Categorical Exclusion B4 (IHAs with no anticipated serious injury or mortality) of the Companion Manual for NAO 216-6A, which do not individually or cumulatively have the potential for significant impacts on the quality of the human environment and for which we have not identified any extraordinary circumstances that would preclude this categorical exclusion. Accordingly, NMFS has preliminarily determined that the issuance of the proposed IHA qualifies to be categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

**Summary of Request**

May 10, 2024, NMFS received a request from Hoonah for an IHA to take marine mammals incidental to pile driving and removal activities associated with the Hoonah Cargo Dock project in Hoonah, Alaska. Following NMFS' review of the application, Hoonah submitted a revised versions on September 10, 2024 and October 15, 2024. The application was deemed adequate and complete on October 22, 2024. Hoonah's request is for take of 8 species of marine mammals by Level B harassment and, for a subset of these species, Level A harassment. Neither Hoonah nor NMFS expect serious injury