

Reasons: The foreign instrument provides a dual mirror image furnace with a homogeneous temperature gradient around the horizontal plane with a simultaneous steeper temperature gradient along the vertical portion for growth of various crystals. The National Aeronautics and Space Administration advised May 8, 2002, that (1) This capability is pertinent to the applicant's intended purpose and (2) it knows of no domestic instrument or apparatus of equivalent scientific value to the foreign instrument for the applicant's intended use (comparable case).

We know of no other instrument or apparatus of equivalent scientific value to the foreign instrument which is being manufactured in the United States.

Gerald A. Zerdy,

Program Manager, Statutory Import Programs Staff.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 120402A]

Endangered and Threatened Species; Take of Anadromous Fish

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

ACTION: Receipt of application for scientific research permit (1408) and request for comment.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that NMFS has received an application for scientific research from California Department of Water Resources (CDWR) in Sacramento, CA (1408). This permit would affect three Evolutionarily Significant Units (ESUs) of salmonids identified in the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section below. This document serves to notify the public of the availability of the permit application for review and comment.

DATES: Written comments on the permit application must be received at the appropriate address or fax number (see **ADDRESSES**) no later than 5 p.m. Pacific Standard Time on January 9, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Written comments on this request should be sent to the appropriate office as indicated below. Comments may also be sent via fax to the number indicated for the request. Comments will not be accepted if submitted via e-mail or the Internet. The

applications and related documents are available for review, by appointment, for permit 1408: Protected Resources Division, NMFS, 650 Capitol Mall, Suite 8-300, Sacramento, CA 95814 (ph: 916-930-3600; fax: 916-930-3629).

Documents may also be reviewed by appointment in the Office of Protected Resources, F/PR3, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910 3226 (301-713-1401).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Rosalie del Rosario at phone number 916-930-3600, or e-mail:

Rosalie.delRosario@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Authority

Issuance of permits and permit modifications, as required by the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 1543) (ESA), is based on a finding that such permits/modifications: (1) are applied for in good faith; (2) would not operate to the disadvantage of the listed species which are the subject of the permits; and (3) are consistent with the purposes and policies set forth in section 2 of the ESA. Authority to take listed species is subject to conditions set forth in the permits. Permits and modifications are issued in accordance with and are subject to the ESA and NMFS regulations governing listed fish and wildlife permits (50 CFR parts 222 226).

Those individuals requesting a hearing on an application listed in this notice should set out the specific reasons why a hearing on that application would be appropriate (see **ADDRESSES**). The holding of such a hearing is at the discretion of the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, NOAA. All statements and opinions contained in the permit action summaries are those of the applicant and do not necessarily reflect the views of NMFS.

Species Covered in This Notice

This notice is relevant to 3 federally listed salmonid ESUs: endangered Sacramento River Winter-run Chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*), threatened Central Valley Spring-run Chinook salmon (*O. tshawytscha*), and threatened Central Valley steelhead (*O. mykiss*).

New Applications Received

CDWR requests a 2-year permit for incidental take of adult endangered Sacramento River Winter-run Chinook salmon, threatened Central Valley Spring-run Chinook salmon and threatened Central Valley steelhead in the mainstem of the Sacramento River.

The purpose of the study is to provide information on swimming performance and behavior of white sturgeon to assist the construction and operation of sturgeon passage structures that will be applicable to proposed North Delta Through Delta Facilities.

Dated: December 4, 2002.

Margaret Lorenz,

Acting Chief, Endangered Species Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 02-31158 Filed 12-9-02; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 120402B]

Endangered and Threatened Species; Take of Anadromous Fish

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

ACTION: Issuance of modification to permit 1044 to the Southwest Fisheries Science Center (SWFSC) in Santa Cruz, CA.

SUMMARY: Notice is given that NMFS has issued a modification to permit 1044 to SWFSC that authorizes takes of threatened Endangered Species Act (ESA) listed anadromous fish species for research purposes subject to certain conditions set forth therein.

ADDRESSES: The applications and related documents are available for review in the following offices, by appointment:

Protected Resources Division, NMFS, 777 Sonoma Avenue, Room 325, Santa Rosa, CA 95404-6528.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For permit 1044: Diana Hines, Protected Resources Division, NMFS, Santa Rosa, CA (707) 575-6057, or e-mail: *diana.hines@noaa.gov.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Species Covered in This Notice

The following species and evolutionarily significant units are covered in this notice: Central California Coast steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*).

Issuance of this permit, as required by the ESA, was based on a finding that such modification was: (1) applied for in good faith; (2) would not operate to the disadvantage of the listed species which are the subject of the permit; and (3) is consistent with the purposes and policies set forth in section 2 of the

ESA. This permit was issued in accordance with, and is subject to, part 222 of Title 50 CFR, the NMFS regulations governing listed species permits.

Modification to Permit Issued

Notice was published on August 23, 2002, that SWFSC applied for a modification to permit 1044 to take threatened Central California Coast steelhead associated with a life history diversity study and density study in Soquel Creek, CA. Modification 2 to Permit 1044 was issued on November 12, 2002, authorizing takes of juvenile, threatened, Central California Coast steelhead. Modification 2 is valid for the duration of the permit.

Permit 1044M2 expires June 30, 2007.

Dated: December 4, 2002.

Margaret Lorenz,

Acting Chief, Endangered Species Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Telecommunications and Information Administration

Docket No. 010222048-2293-06

The Health and Life Insurance Cancellation Notices Exception of the Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce Act

AGENCY: National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), U.S. Department of Commerce

ACTION: Notice, Request for Comments

SUMMARY: Section 101 of the Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce Act, Pub. L. No. 106-229, *codified at* 15 U.S.C. 7001 *et seq.* ("ESIGN" or "the Act"), preserves the legal effect, validity, and enforceability of signatures and contracts relating to electronic transactions and electronic signatures used in the formation of electronic contracts. 15 U.S.C. 7001(a). Section 103 (a) and (b) of the Act, however, provides that the provisions of section 101 do not apply to contracts and records governed by statutes and regulations regarding court documents; probate and domestic law matters; state commercial law; consumer law covering utility services, residential property foreclosures and defaults, and insurance benefits; product recall notices; and hazardous materials documents. Section 103 of the Act also requires the Secretary of Commerce, through the Assistant Secretary for

Communications, to review the operation of these exceptions to evaluate whether they continue to be necessary for consumer protection, and to make recommendations to Congress based on this evaluation. 15 U.S.C. 7003(c)(1). This Notice is intended to solicit comments from interested parties for purposes of this evaluation, specifically on the health and life insurance cancellation notices exception to the ESIGN Act. *See* 15 U.S.C. 7003(b)(2)(C). NTIA will publish separate notices requesting comment on the other exceptions listed in section 103 of the ESIGN Act.¹

DATES: Written comments and papers are requested to be submitted on or before February 10, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Written comments should be submitted to Josephine Scarlett, National Telecommunications and Information Administration, 14th Street and Constitution Ave., NW., Washington, DC 20230. Paper submissions should include a three and one-half inch computer diskette in HTML, ASCII, Word, or WordPerfect format (please specify version). Diskettes should be labeled with the name and organizational affiliation of the filer, and the name of the word processing program used to create the document. In the alternative, comments may be submitted electronically to the following electronic mail address: *esignstudy_ insnot@ntia.doc.gov*. Comments submitted via electronic mail also should be submitted in one or more of the formats specified above.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For questions about this request for comment, contact: Josephine Scarlett, Attorney, Office of the Chief Counsel, NTIA, 14th Street and Constitution Ave., NW., Washington, DC 20230, telephone (202) 482-1816 or electronic mail: *jscarlett@ntia.doc.gov*. Media inquiries should be directed to the Office of Public Affairs, National Telecommunications and Information Administration, at (202) 482-7002.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background: Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce Act

Congress enacted the Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce Act, Pub. L. No. 106-229, 114 Stat. 464 (2000), to facilitate the use of electronic records and signatures in interstate and foreign commerce and to remove uncertainty about the validity of

¹ Comments submitted in response to *Federal Register* notices requesting comment on the other exceptions to ESIGN will be considered as part of the same section 103 evaluation and not as part of a separate review of the Act.

contracts entered into electronically. Section 101 requires, among other things, that electronic signatures, contracts, and records be given legal effect, validity, and enforceability. Sections 103(a) and (b) of the Act provides that the requirements of section 101 will not apply to contracts and records governed by statutes and regulations regarding: probate and domestic law matters; state commercial law; consumer law covering utility services, residential default and foreclosure notices; insurance benefits cancellation notices; product recall notices; and hazardous materials documents.

The statutory language providing for an exception to section 101 of ESIGN for health and life insurance cancellation notices is found in section 103(b)(2)(C) of the Act:

Sec. 103. [15 U.S.C. 7003] Specific Exceptions.

(b) Additional Exceptions.— The provisions of section 101 shall not apply to—

* * * *

(2) any notice of—

* * * *

(C) the cancellation or termination of health insurance or benefits or life insurance benefits (excluding annuities)—

* * * *

The statutory language requiring the Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information to submit a report to Congress on the results of the evaluation of the section 103 exceptions to the ESIGN Act is found in section 103(c)(1) of the Act as set forth below.

(c) Review of Exceptions.—

(1) Evaluation required.— The Secretary of Commerce, acting through the Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information, shall review the operation of the exceptions in subsections (a) and (b) to evaluate, over a period of 3 years, whether such exceptions continue to be necessary for the protection of consumers. Within 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Assistant Secretary shall submit a report to Congress on the results of such evaluation.

Health and Life Insurance Cancellation Notices

Information regarding life and health insurance rates and benefits is widely distributed through electronic means, including Internet websites and facsimiles. The ESIGN Act exception for life and health insurance cancellation notices excludes insurance cancellation notices sent to consumers by an