

We are issuing and publishing these results in accordance with sections 751(a)(1) and 777(i)(1) of the Act.

Dated: March 1, 2004.

**James J. Jochum,**

*Assistant Secretary for Import Administration.*

[FR Doc. 04-5008 Filed 3-4-04; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 021704B]

#### Groundfish Fisheries of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands (BSAI) Area and the Gulf of Alaska, King and Tanner Crab Fisheries in the BSAI, Scallop and Salmon Fisheries Off the Coast of Alaska

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

**ACTION:** Notice of public meetings for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) Identification and Conservation in Alaska.

**SUMMARY:** NMFS and the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) have completed a DEIS for EFH in Alaska. The DEIS evaluates alternatives and environmental consequences for the following three actions: describing and identifying EFH for fisheries managed by the Council; adopting an approach for the Council to identify Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (HAPCs) within EFH; and minimizing to the extent practicable the adverse effects of Council-managed fishing on EFH. NMFS and the Council will hold three public meetings during the DEIS' comment period.

**DATES:** Public meetings will be held in March and April 2004. See

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** under the heading "Meeting Dates, Times, and Locations" for specific dates and times of the public meetings.

**ADDRESSES:** See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** under the heading "Meeting Dates, Times, and Locations" for specific locations of the public meetings.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mary B. Goode, (907) 586-7636.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

#### Background

The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act

(Magnuson-Stevens Act) requires NMFS and the Council to describe and identify EFH in fishery management plans (FMPs), minimize to the extent practicable the adverse effects of fishing on EFH, and identify other actions to encourage the conservation and enhancement of EFH. Federal agencies that authorize, fund, or undertake actions that may adversely affect EFH must consult with NMFS, and NMFS must provide conservation recommendations to Federal and state agencies regarding actions that would adversely affect EFH. The Council also has authority to comment on Federal or state agency actions that would adversely affect the habitat, including EFH, of managed species.

The Council amended its FMPs for the groundfish, crab, scallop, and salmon fisheries in 1998 to address the EFH requirements. The Secretary of Commerce, acting through NMFS, approved the Council's EFH FMP amendments in January 1999 (64 FR 20216; April 26, 1999). In the spring of 1999, a coalition of seven environmental groups and two fishermen's associations filed suit in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia to challenge NMFS' approval of EFH FMP amendments prepared by the Gulf of Mexico, Caribbean, New England, North Pacific, and Pacific Fishery Management Councils. The focus of the litigation was whether NMFS and the Council had adequately evaluated the effects of fishing on EFH and taken appropriate measures to mitigate adverse effects. In September 2000, the court upheld NMFS' approval of the EFH amendments under the Magnuson-Stevens Act, but ruled that the environmental assessment (EA) prepared for the amendments violated the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The court ordered NMFS to complete new and thorough NEPA analyses for each EFH amendment in question. The DEIS for EFH Identification and Conservation in Alaska is the curative NEPA analysis for the North Pacific Council's FMPs. A notice of availability for the DEIS was published in the **Federal Register** on January 16, 2004 (69 FR 2593) and is available on the internet at [www.fakr.noaa.gov/habitat/seis/efheis.htm](http://www.fakr.noaa.gov/habitat/seis/efheis.htm). NMFS is accepting public comments through April 15, 2004.

Most of the controversy surrounding the necessary level of protection needed for EFH concerns the effects of fishing activities on sea floor habitats. Substantial differences of opinion exist as to the extent and significance of habitat alteration caused by bottom trawling and other fishing activities.

The DEIS reexamines the effects of fishing on EFH, presents a wider range of alternatives, and provides a more thorough analysis of potential impacts than the EA approved in 1999. Because the court did not limit its criticism of the 1999 analysis solely to the section that considered the effects of fishing on EFH, the DEIS also reexamines options for identifying EFH and HAPCs.

The actions the Council and NMFS take in association with the DEIS may result in new FMP amendments to modify the existing EFH and/or HAPC designations and/or to implement additional measures to reduce the effects of fishing on EFH.

#### Meeting Dates, Times, and Locations

NMFS and the Council will hold public meetings as follows:

1. Friday, March 19, 2004, 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. Alaska local time (ALT) - NMFS Alaska Fisheries Science Center, Jim Traynor Conference Room, Building 4, 7600 Sand Point Way NE, Seattle, WA.
2. Wednesday, March 31, 2004, 6 p.m. - 9 p.m. ALT - Anchorage Hilton, Katmai/Dillingham Room, 500 West Third Avenue, Anchorage, AK.
3. Thursday, April 8, 2004, 1 p.m. - 4 p.m. ALT - NMFS Alaska Regional Office, 709 West 9<sup>th</sup> Street, Room 445, Juneau, AK.

#### Special Accommodations

These meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for special accommodations should be directed to Mary B. Goode (see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**) at least five working days before the meeting date.

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

Dated: March 1, 2004.

**Bruce C. Morehead,**

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

[FR Doc. 04-5019 Filed 3-4-04; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 022404A]

#### Marine Mammals; File No. 1050-1727-00

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

**ACTION:** Issuance of permit.

**SUMMARY:** Notice is hereby given that Pribilof Project Office, NOAA, National

Ocean Service, 7600 Sand Point Way, Seattle, Washington 98115 (Principal Investigator: John A. Lindsay), has been issued a permit to take by harassment, Northern fur seals (*Callorhinus ursinus*) for purposes of commercial/educational photography.

**ADDRESSES:** The permit and related documents are available for review upon written request or by appointment in the following office(s):

Permits, Conservation and Education Division, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 13705, Silver Spring, MD 20910; phone (301)713-2289; fax (301)713-0376; and Alaska Region, NMFS, P.O. Box 21668, Juneau, AK 99802-1668; phone (907)586-7221; fax (907)586-7249.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Ruth Johnson or Jennifer Jefferies (301)713-2289.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** On December 18, 2003, notice was published in the **Federal Register** (68 FR 70493) that a request for a commercial/educational photography permit to take by harassment, Northern fur seals had been submitted by the above-named organization. The requested permit has been issued under the authority of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1361 et seq), and the Fur Seal Act of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1151 et seq.).

Dated: February 27, 2004.

**Stephen L. Leathery,**

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

[FR Doc. 04-5020 Filed 3-4-04; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3510-22-S**

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**COMMITTEE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TEXTILE AGREEMENTS**

**Establishment of an Import Limit for Certain Man-Made Fiber Textile Products Produced or Manufactured in Belarus**

March 1, 2004.

**AGENCY:** Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements (CITA).

**ACTION:** Issuing a directive to the Commissioner, Bureau of Customs and Border Protection establishing a limit.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** March 5, 2004.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Naomi Freeman, International Trade Specialist, Office of Textiles and Apparel, U.S. Department of Commerce, (202) 482-4212. For information on the

quota status of this limit, refer to the Quota Status Reports posted on the bulletin boards of each Customs port, call (202) 927-5850, or refer to the Bureau of Customs and Border Protection Web site at <http://www.cbp.gov>. For information on embargoes and quota re-openings, refer to the Office of Textiles and Apparel website at <http://otexa.ita.doc.gov>.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**Authority:** Section 204 of the Agricultural Act of 1956, as amended (7 U.S.C. 1854); Executive Order 11651 of March 3, 1972, as amended.

On December 12, 2003, CITA directed the Commissioner, Bureau of Customs and Border Protection, to establish 2004 import limits for certain wool and man-made fiber textile products produced or manufactured in Belarus (See 68 FR 70494, published on December 18, 2003). That directive included a limit on Category 622, with a sublimit on 622-L. The Bilateral Textile Memorandum of Understanding dated January 10, 2003 between the Governments of the United States and Belarus also calls for an additional sublimit, on Category 622-N. As the United States and Belarus have not been able to reach agreement on the terms of this additional sublimit, the United States is implementing a sublimit on Category 622-N pending agreement with the Government of Belarus on its terms. This sublimit may be revised if the Governments of the United States and Belarus reach agreement on the terms of the sublimit or if Belarus becomes a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the United States applies the WTO agreement to Belarus.

In the letter published below, the Chairman of CITA directs the Commissioner, Bureau of Customs and Border Protection to establish the limit for Category 622-N.

A description of the textile and apparel categories in terms of HTS numbers is available in the CORRELATION: Textile and Apparel Categories with the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States (see Federal Register notice 68 FR 1599, published on January 13, 2003).

**James C. Leonard III,**

*Chairman, Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements.*

**Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements**

March 1, 2004.

Commissioner,  
*Bureau of Customs and Border Protection,  
Washington, DC 20229.*

Dear Commissioner: Pursuant to section 204 of the Agricultural Act of 1956, as amended (7 U.S.C. 1854); Executive Order

11651 of March 3, 1972, as amended; you are directed to prohibit, effective on March 5, 2004, entry into the United States for consumption and withdrawal from warehouse for consumption of glass fiber fabric products in Category 622-N<sup>1</sup>, produced or manufactured in Belarus and exported during the twelve-month period beginning on January 1, 2004 and extending through December 31, 2004 in excess of 611,326 square meters.

Textile products in Category 622-N which have been exported to the United States prior to January 1, 2004 shall not be subject to this directive.

Textile products in this category which have been released from the custody of the Bureau of Customs and Border Protection under the provisions of 19 U.S.C. 1448(b) or 1484(a)(1) prior to the effective date of this directive shall not be denied entry under this directive.

This limit may be revised if the Governments of the United States and Belarus reach agreement on the terms of the sublimit or if Belarus becomes a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the United States applies the WTO agreement to Belarus.

Import charges will be provided at a later date.

In carrying out the above directions, the Commissioner, Bureau of Customs and Border Protection should construe entry into the United States for consumption to include entry for consumption into the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

The Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements has determined that this action falls within the foreign affairs exception of the rulemaking provisions of 5 U.S.C. 553(a)(1).

Sincerely,  
James C. Leonard III,  
Chairman, Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements.

[FR Doc.04-4989 Filed 3-4-04; 8:45 am]

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**COMMITTEE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TEXTILE AGREEMENTS**

**Adjustment of Import Limits for Certain Cotton, Wool and Man-Made Fiber Textiles and Textile Products and Silk Blend and Other Vegetable Fiber Apparel Produced or Manufactured in the Philippines**

March 2, 2004.

**AGENCY:** Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements (CITA).

**ACTION:** Issuing a directive to the Commissioner, Bureau of Customs and Border Protection adjusting limits.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** March 9, 2004.

<sup>1</sup> Category 622-N: HTS numbers 7019.52.40.20, 7019.52.90.20, 7019.59.40.20, 7019.59.90.20.