

appointment (See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**).

Written comments or requests for a public hearing on this request should be submitted to the Chief, Permits, Conservation and Education Division, F/PR1, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 13705, Silver Spring, MD 20910. Those individuals requesting a hearing should set forth the specific reasons why a hearing on this particular amendment request would be appropriate.

Comments may also be submitted by facsimile at (301)427-2521, provided the facsimile is confirmed by hard copy submitted by mail and postmarked no later than the closing date of the comment period.

Comments may also be submitted by e-mail. The mailbox address for providing email comments is NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov. Include in the subject line of the e-mail comment the following document identifier: File No. 782-1719-05.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Amy Hapeman or Carrie Hubard, (301)713-2289.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The subject amendment to Permit No. 782-1719-00, issued on June 30, 2004 (69 FR 44514) and most recently amended on November 14, 2006 is requested under the authority of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*) and the regulations governing the taking and importing of marine mammals (50 CFR part 216).

Permit No. 782-1719-04 authorizes NMML to take all species of cetaceans under NMFS jurisdiction during stock assessment activities throughout U.S. territorial waters and the high seas of the North Pacific Ocean, Southern Ocean, and Arctic Ocean. The permit authorizes Level B harassment during close approach for aerial surveys, vessel-based surveys, observations, and photo-identification and Level A harassment during biopsy sampling and attachment of scientific instruments. NMML requests an increase in the number of biopsy samples from and attachment of scientific instruments to gray whales (*Eschrichtius robustus*) to study the animals during their northward migration and expand their spring sampling activities in the Bering Sea and the waters of Washington and Kodiak Island, Alaska. NMML requests to increase the number of non-ESA-listed killer whales (*Orcinus orca*) that may be biopsy sampled and have scientific instruments attached to examine killer whale diet and movement patterns, as directed by the Marine Mammal Commission. NMML

also requests harassment during close approach for aerial and vessel surveys, photo-identification, tagging, and biopsy sampling of non-endangered dwarf sperm whale (*Kogia breviceps*), pygmy sperm whale (*Kogia simus*), rough-toothed dolphin (*Steno bredanensis*), Hawaii spinner dolphin (*Stenella longirostris*), striped dolphin (*Stenella coeruleoalba*), and melon-headed whale (*Peponocephala electra*) in the North Pacific Ocean to develop reliable abundance estimates and examine stock structure. The amended permit, if issued, would be valid until the permit expires on June 30, 2009.

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 this application to the Marine Mammal Commission and its Committee of Scientific Advisors.

Documents may be reviewed in the following locations:

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)427-2521;

Northwest Region, NMFS, 7600 Sand Point Way NE, BIN C15700, Bldg. 1, Seattle, WA 98115-0700; phone (206)526-6150; fax (206)526-6426;

Alaska Region, NMFS, P.O. Box 21668, Juneau, AK 99802-1668; phone (907)586-7221; fax (907)586-7249;

Southwest Region, NMFS, 501 West Ocean Blvd., Suite 4200, Long Beach, CA 90802-4213; phone (562)980-4001; fax (562)980-4018; and

Pacific Islands Region, NMFS, 1601 Kapiolani Blvd., Rm 1110, Honolulu, HI 96814-4700; phone (808)973-2935; fax (808)973-2941.

Dated: February 28, 2007.

Tammy C. Adams,

Acting Chief, Permits, Conservation and Education Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.
[FR Doc. E7-3899 Filed 3-6-07; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 022807D]

Marine Mammals; File Nos. 605-1607 and 605-1904

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

ACTION: Notice; withdrawal of amendment request; receipt of application.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that Whale Center of New England (Mason Weinrich, Principal Investigator), P.O. Box 159, Gloucester, MA 01930 has withdrawn a request to amend Permit No. 605-1607-02 and has applied in due form for a new permit (File No. 605-1904) to conduct research on humpback (*Megaptera novaeangliae*), fin (*Balaenoptera physalus*), and sei (*Balaenoptera borealis*) whales.

DATES: Written, telefaxed, or e-mail comments must be received on or before April 6, 2007.

ADDRESSES: The application 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)427-2521;

Northeast Region, NMFS, One Blackburn Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930-2298; phone (978)281-9300; fax (978)281-9394; and

Southeast Region, NMFS, 263 13th Avenue South, Saint Petersburg, Florida 33701; phone (727)824-5312; fax (727)824-5309.

Written comments or requests for a public hearing on this application should be mailed to the Chief, Permits, Conservation and Education Division, F/PR1, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 13705, Silver Spring, MD 20910. Those individuals requesting a hearing should set forth the specific reasons why a hearing on this particular request would be appropriate.

Comments may also be submitted by facsimile at (301)427-2521, provided the facsimile is confirmed by hard copy submitted by mail and postmarked no later than the closing date of the comment period.

Comments may also be submitted by e-mail. The mailbox address for providing e-mail comments is

NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov. Include in the subject line of the e-mail comment the following document identifier: File No. 605-1904.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Amy Hapeman or Jaclyn Daly, (301)713-2289.

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 222-226).

The Whale Center of New England requests a 5-year scientific research permit to continue population monitoring of humpback, fin, and sei whales in North Atlantic waters of the northeastern and mid-Atlantic U.S. Research would help determine baleen whale population status and trends, assess prey availability and whale-prey interactions, and help develop a technique to age whales from biopsy samples. The applicant is requesting to harass 400 humpback, 250 fin, and 100 sei whales by close approach for vessel surveys and photo-identification annually. The applicant also requests to biopsy sample 75 humpback and 75 fin whales annually, up to 20 of which for each species may be young calves. The applicant also requests to suction-cup tag 40 humpback, 20 fin, and 25 sei whales greater than six months of age annually. With this new permit application, the request for an amendment to Permit No. 605-1607-02, published on April 7, 2004 (69 FR 18357), has been withdrawn.

Concurrent with the publication of this notice in the **Federal Register**, NMFS is forwarding copies of this application to the Marine Mammal Commission and its Committee of Scientific Advisors.

Dated: February 28, 2007.

Tammy C. Adams,

Acting Chief, Permits, Conservation and Education Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.
[FR Doc. E7-3900 Filed 3-6-07; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 030107E]

Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (Council); Public Meetings

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

ACTION: Notice of public meetings.

SUMMARY: The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (Council) will convene public meetings.

DATES: The meeting will be held March 26 - 30, 2007. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** for specific dates and times.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Embassy Suites, 570 Scenic Gulf Drive, Destin, FL 32550.

Council address: Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, 2203 North Lois Avenue, Suite 1100, Tampa, FL 33607.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Wayne E. Swingle, Executive Director, Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council; telephone: (813) 348-1630.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Council

Thursday, March 29, 2007

8:30 a.m. - The Council meeting will begin with a review the agenda and minutes.

8:45 a.m. - 9 a.m. - Public testimony on exempted fishing permits (EFPs), if any.

9 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. - The Council will hold an Open Public Comment Period regarding any fishery issue or concern. People wishing to speak before the Council should complete a public comment card prior to the comment period.

The Council will then review and discuss reports from the previous three day's committee meetings as follows:

1 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. - Joint Reef Fish/Shrimp Management;

3:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. - Reef Fish Management;

4:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. - CLOSED SESSION for Advisory Panel (AP) and Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) Section Committees and Reef Fish Committee;

6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. - NMFS Public Scoping Session on guidance for use of the annual catch limits.

Friday, March 30, 2007

8:30 a.m. - The Council meeting will reconvene to continue reviewing and

discussing reports from the previous three day's committee meetings as follows:

8:30 a.m. - 9 a.m. - Mackerel Management;

9 a.m. - 9:30 a.m. - Joint Reef Fish/Mackerel/Red Drum;

9:30 a.m. - 9:45 a.m. - Budget/Personnel;

9:45 a.m. - 10 a.m. - Data Collection; 10 a.m. - 11 a.m. - Administrative Policy; and

11 a.m. - 12 p.m. - Other Business items.

Committees

Monday, March 26, 2007

1 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. - CLOSED SESSION - The AP Selection Committee will meet to appoint AP members.

3:30 p.m. - 5 p.m. - CLOSED SESSION - The SSC Selection Committee will meet to appoint SSC, Stock Assessment Panel (SAP) and Socioeconomic Panel (SEP) members.

5 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. - The Budget/Personnel Committee will meet to discuss the State Liaison Budget Increases.

Tuesday March 27, 2007

8:30 a.m. - 12 p.m. - The Joint Reef Fish/Shrimp Management Committee will meet to review Southeast Fishery Science Center (SEFSC) Analyses Runs. The Committee will also review the current Public Hearing Draft of Reef Fish Amendment 27/Shrimp Amendment 14 and the SSC's recommendations; the NMFS' FEIS and Interim Rule for Red Snapper; the SEFSC Report on Release Mortality in Relation to Depth and Dolphin Predation, the Framework Action to Revise the List of Allowable bycatch reduction devices (BRDs); NMFS Interim Rule for Red Snapper; and an Options Paper for Reef Fish Amendment 31/Shrimp Amendment 15.

1:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. - The Joint Reef Fish/Shrimp Management Committee continues.

Wednesday, March 28, 2007

8:30 a.m. - 12 noon - The Reef Fish Management Committee will meet to discuss the updates on Reef Fish Amendment 29; the Ad Hoc Grouper Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) AP recommendations for an IFQ program; the Guidelines for a Referendum for Grouper/Tilefish IFQ; the Scoping Document for Amendment 30; PARTIALLY CLOSED SESSION - the formation of an Ad Hoc Recreational Red Snapper AP for developing new ideas to manage recreational and for-hire red snapper fisheries.