

Multispecies FMP), and the bluefin tuna fishery off the coast of New Jersey during the month of June. In the case of billfish and undersized swordfish, time/area closures for the pelagic longline fishery appear to show promise as interaction with billfish and undersized swordfish bycatch tend to occur in discernable patterns.

The draft HMS FMP and Atlantic billfish FMP amendment included a preferred alternative for time/area closure in the Florida Straits (26° to 28° N. lat., 78° to 81° W. long.) to pelagic longline fishing activity during the months of July, August, and September as part of a management strategy to reduce bycatch of undersized swordfish and Atlantic billfish. NMFS received many written and verbal comments on this proposed closure. The majority of comments received questioned the effectiveness of the Florida Straits closure based on the small size of the selected area relative to the range of the target species within the U.S. EEZ and Atlantic Ocean. In the final HMS FMP, NMFS agreed that this closure would likely be ineffective, and that NMFS would consider, under the framework provisions of the HMS FMP, a larger area or areas. Because of the potential magnitude of the economic and social impacts that would likely result from a more extensive time/area closure, NMFS delayed implementation until completion of further analyses and consultation with the Highly Migratory Species and Atlantic Billfish Advisory Panels (AP's).

On June 10 and 11, 1999, NMFS met with the HMS and Billfish APs to discuss the issue of expanded time/area closures. NMFS has prepared a draft Technical Memorandum that provides a preliminary discussion of the information, methods, and procedures used to identify and analyze alternative time/area closures for U.S. pelagic longlines operating in the Atlantic Ocean. A copy of the HMS Time/Area Technical Memorandum is currently available (see ADDRESSES).

Management Measures Under Consideration

NMFS will consider various spatial and temporal closures of waters along the continental U.S. Atlantic coast, including the Gulf of Mexico, to U.S. pelagic longlines. Analyses will likely be limited to areas generally within the U.S. EEZ where most of the incidental catch of species not sought occurs. It is anticipated that the spatial boundaries for time/area closures will follow specific latitudes or longitudes, as appropriate, to facilitate practical application of potential closures to both

commercial vessels and enforcement entities. NMFS will also consider the impacts under various assumptions regarding displaced fishing effort, in order to fully evaluate environmental, social, economic and biological impacts of the alternatives.

NMFS has determined that preparation of an SEIS is appropriate because of the potentially significant impact of regulations on the human environment. Based on discussions with the APs, NMFS is preparing a SEIS to fully assess potential impacts on the natural and human environment of various time/area closure alternatives to reduce bycatch of undersized swordfish, Atlantic billfish, other overfished or approaching overfished HMS, and protected species, from U.S. Atlantic pelagic longlines.

Timing of the Analysis and Tentative Decisionmaking Schedule

The public will be provided ample opportunity for written and verbal comments following the publication of the proposed rule. NMFS anticipates that a proposed rule outlining a time/area fishery closure for pelagic longlines will be completed by mid-December, 1999, with a final rule completed by May 1, 2000.

Dated: October 27, 1999.

Gary C. Matlock,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 102599B]

South Atlantic Fishery Management Council; Public Meetings

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

ACTION: Notice of public meetings.

SUMMARY: The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council's (Council) Marine Reserves Advisory Panel will meet in Charleston, SC.

DATES: The Marine Reserves Advisory Panel meeting will be held on November 17, 1999, from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and on November 18, 1999, from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The meetings will be held at the Town and Country Inn, 2008 Savannah Highway, Charleston, SC 29407; telephone: 843-571-1000.

Council address: South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, One Southpark Circle, Suite 306, Charleston, SC 29407-4699.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kim Iverson, telephone: (843) 571-4366; fax: (843) 769-4520; email: kim.iverson@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The advisory panel will review and provide comments and guidance on the following documents: the initial draft of "Why Consider Marine Reserves"; "The Use of Marine Reserves in the South Atlantic Council's Area of Authority"; and the draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the South Atlantic Council and the Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary.

Although non-emergency issues may come before this Panel for discussion, in accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, those issues may not be the subject of formal action during these meetings. Action will be restricted to those issues specifically listed in this notice and any issues arising after publication of this notice that require emergency action under section 305(c) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, provided the public has been notified of the Council's intent to take final action to address the emergency.

Special Accommodations

These meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to the Council office (see ADDRESSES) by November 3, 1999.

Dated: October 27, 1999.

Bruce C. Morehead,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 102699F]

Marine Mammals; File No. 782-1532-00

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

ACTION: Receipt of application.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the National Marine Mammal Laboratory, Alaska Fisheries Science

Center, National Marine Fisheries Service, 7600 Sand Point Way, NE, BIN C15700, Seattle, WA 98115, has applied in due form for a permit to take Steller sea lions (*Eumetopias jubatus*), northern fur seals (*Callorhinus ursinus*), and harbor seals (*Phoca vitulina richardsi*) for purposes of scientific research.

DATES: Written or telefaxed comments must be received on or before December 2, 1999.

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

Permits and Documentation Division, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 13130, Silver Spring, MD 20910 (301/713-2289);

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

Northwest Region, NMFS, 7600 Sand Point Way, NE, BIN C15700, Seattle, WA 98115 (206/526-6165).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ruth Johnson, 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 (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*), the regulations governing the taking, importing, and exporting of endangered and threatened species (50 CFR 222-226), and the Fur Seal Act of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1151 *et seq.*).

The applicant proposes to take Steller sea lions by harassment during aerial surveys, capture, brand, tissue sample, biopsy and blood sample, attach satellite/VHF transmitters and tag with Allflex tags, and scat collections. The applicant will also conduct behavioral observations and set up remote monitoring stations on rookeries and haulouts. Additionally, northern fur seals will be taken by harassment during Steller sea lion surveys on Bogoslof Island and harbor seals during surveys in the Gulf of Alaska and Aleutian Islands. The applicant indicates that mortalities probably will not occur, but requests authority for up to five accidental mortalities.

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.

Written comments or requests for a public hearing on this application should be mailed to the Chief, Permits and Documentation 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) 713-0376, provided the facsimile is confirmed by hard copy submitted by mail and postmarked no later than the closing date of the comment period. Please note that comments will not be accepted by e-mail or by other electronic media.

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: October 27, 1999.

Ann D. Terbush,

Chief, Permits and Documentation Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Department of the Navy

Record of Decision for the Disposal and Reuse of Naval Air Warfare Center, Aircraft Division, Warminster, PA

SUMMARY: The Department of the Navy (Navy), pursuant to Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), 42 U.S.C. 4332(2)(C) (1994), and the regulations of the Council on Environmental Quality that implement NEPA procedures, 40 CFR parts 1500-1508, hereby announces its decision to dispose of Naval Air Warfare Center, Aircraft Division, Warminster (NAWC), which is located in Bucks County, Pennsylvania.

Navy analyzed the impacts of the disposal and reuse of NAWC Warminster in an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), as required by NEPA. The EIS analyzed four reuse alternatives and identified the Proposed Reuse Plan, Naval Air Warfare Center, Bucks County, approved on June 10, 1997, (Reuse Plan) as the Preferred Alternative. The Preferred Alternative proposed to use the base for residential, commercial, municipal, and assisted living activities; to provide low income

and homeless assistance services; to develop public parks and recreational areas; and to build access roads. The Federal Lands Reuse Authority of Bucks County (FLRA) is the Local Redevelopment Authority (LRA) for NAWC Warminster. Department of Defense Rule on Revitalizing Base Closure Communities and Community Assistance (DoD Rule), 32 CFR 176.20(a).

Navy intends to dispose of NAWC Warminster in a manner that is consistent with the Reuse Plan. Navy has determined that the proposed mixed land use will meet the goals of achieving local economic redevelopment, creating new jobs, and providing additional housing, while limiting adverse environmental impacts and ensuring land uses that are compatible with adjacent property. This Record of Decision does not mandate a specific mix of land uses. Rather, it leaves selection of the particular means to achieve the proposed redevelopment to the acquiring entities and the local zoning authorities.

Background

Under the authority of the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act of 1990 (DBCRA), Public Law 101-510, 10 U.S.C. 2687 note (1994), the 1991 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission recommended the realignment of Naval Air Development Center, Warminster. This recommendation was approved by President Bush and accepted by the One Hundred Second Congress in 1991.

As a result of the 1991 realignment, most of the Warminster Development Center's aircraft systems research and development and test and evaluation functions moved to Naval Air Warfare Center, Aircraft Division, Patuxent River, Maryland. On January 1, 1992, the remaining facilities, *i.e.*, the inertial guidance laboratory (Building 108), the navigation equipment laboratory (Building 125), the communications systems laboratory (Building 138), the dynamic flight simulator (Buildings 70 and 72), the family housing units, and the Oreland Open Water Test Facility, a 15-acre non-contiguous site located about eight miles southwest of NAWC Warminster in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, were renamed Naval Air Warfare Center, Aircraft Division, Warminster.

The 1995 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission modified the 1991 Commission's recommendation by directing Navy to close NAWC Warminster, including the Oreland Open Water Test Facility. The 1995 Commission's recommendation was