

suspension of liquidation will be refunded or canceled. If, however, the ITC determines that such injury does exist, we will issue a countervailing duty order.

Return or Destruction of Proprietary Information

This notice serves as the only reminder to parties subject to Administrative Protective Order (APO) of their responsibility concerning the return or destruction of proprietary information disclosed under APO in accordance with 19 CFR 355.34(d). Failure to comply is a violation of the APO.

This determination is published pursuant to section 705(d) of the Act.

Dated: July 20, 1998.

Joseph A. Spetrini,

Acting Assistant Secretary for Import Administration.

[FR Doc. 98-20015 Filed 7-28-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-DS-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Institute of Standards and Technology

Judges Panel of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award

AGENCY: National Institute of Standards and Technology, Department of Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of closed meeting.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C. app. 2, notice is hereby given that there will be a closed meeting of the Judges Panel of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award on Tuesday, August 11, 1998. The Judges Panel is composed of nine members prominent in the field of quality management and appointed by the Secretary of Commerce. The purpose of this meeting is to review the stage I process and selection of applicants for the consensus stage of the evaluation. The applications under review contain trade secrets and proprietary commercial information submitted to the Government in confidence.

DATES: The meeting will convene August 11, 1998, at 8:00 a.m. and adjourn at 5:00 p.m. on August 11, 1998. The entire meeting will be closed.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the National Institute of Standards and Technology, Administrative Building, Gaithersburg, Maryland 20899.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Harry Hertz, Director, National Quality Program, National Institute of Standards and Technology,

Gaithersburg, Maryland 20899, telephone number (301) 975-2361.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Assistant Secretary for Administration, with the concurrence of the General Counsel, formally determined on May 22, 1998, that the meeting of the Judges Panel will be closed pursuant to Section 10(d) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C. app. 2, as amended by Section 5(c) of the Government in the Sunshine Act, Pub. L. 94-409. The meeting which involves examination of records and discussion of Award applicant data, may be closed to the public in accordance with Section 552(c)(4) of Title 5, United States Code, since the meeting is likely to disclose trade secrets and commercial or financial information obtained from a person and privileged or confidential.

Dated: July 23, 1998.

Robert E. Hebner,

Acting Deputy Director.

[FR Doc. 98-20252 Filed 7-28-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-13-M

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Institute of Standards and Technology

Announcement of a Meeting to Discuss an Opportunity To Join a Cooperative Research and Development Consortium on Sprinkler System Performance Prediction

AGENCY: National Institute of Standards and Technology, Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) invites interested parties to attend a meeting on September 1, 1998 to discuss the possibility of setting up a cooperative research consortium on Sprinkler System Performance Prediction. The goal of the consortium is to produce with industrial partners a fire simulation system capable of quantifying the performance of existing and planned fire sprinkler systems in industrial spaces.

DATES: The meeting will take place on September 1, 1998 at 9:00 a.m. Interested parties should contact NIST to confirm their interest at the address, telephone number or FAX number shown below.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will take place in Polymers Building (224), Room B245, National Institute of Standards and Technology, Gaithersburg, MD 20899-0001.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Dr. Glenn P. Forney, Chemistry Building (222), Room A255, National Institute of Standards and Technology, Gaithersburg, MD 20899-0001. Telephone: 301-975-2313; FAX: 301-975-4052; e-mail: gforney@nist.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Any program undertaken will be within the scope and confines of The Federal Technology Transfer Act of 1986 (Public Law 99-502, 15 U.S.C. 3710a), which provides federal laboratories including NIST, with the authority to enter into cooperative research agreements with qualified parties. Under this law, NIST may contribute personnel, equipment, and facilities but no funds to the cooperative research program. This is not a grant program.

The R&D staff of each industrial partner in the Consortium will be able to interact with NIST researchers to produce with industrial partners a fire simulation system capable of quantifying the performance of existing and planned fire sprinkler systems in industrial spaces. The system consists of a computational firm model, sprinkler hardware measurements, and methods to exchange input data and calculated results to facilitate its use by industry.

Dated: July 23, 1998.

Robert E. Hebner,

Acting Deputy Director.

[FR Doc. 98-20251 Filed 7-28-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-13-M

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 041598A]

Taking and Importing of Marine Mammals; Offshore Seismic Activities in the Beaufort Sea

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

ACTION: Notice of withdrawal of an application for an incidental harassment authorization.

SUMMARY: On July 6, 1998, NMFS was notified by BP Exploration (Alaska) (BPXA) that BPXA would not be conducting seismic surveys for oil and gas exploration in the U.S. Beaufort Sea during the 1998 open-water season. As a result, BPXA has requested NMFS to withdraw its application for an incidental harassment authorization under the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) and, by this document, NMFS is noting that withdrawal.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Kenneth R. Hollingshead, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, (301) 713-2055, Brad Smith, Western Alaska Field Office, NMFS, (907) 271-5006.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**Background**

Sections 101(a)(5)(A) and (D) of the MMPA (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*) directs the Secretary of Commerce to allow, upon request, the incidental, but not intentional, taking 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 issued or, if the taking is limited to harassment, a notice of a proposed authorization is provided to the public for review.

Permission may 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 subsistence uses and that the permissible methods of taking and requirements pertaining to the monitoring and reporting of such taking are set forth.

Application

On March 26, 1998, NMFS received an application from BPXA requesting a 1-year renewal of its authorization for the harassment of small numbers of several species of marine mammals incidental to conducting seismic surveys during the open water season in the Beaufort Sea between Harrison Bay and Camden Bay/Flaxman Island, AK. Weather permitting, the survey was expected to take place between approximately July 1 and October 20, 1998. A detailed description of the work proposed for 1998 is contained in the application and need not be repeated here. A notice of receipt of the application and proposed authorization was published on May 6, 1998 (63 FR 25015), and a 30-day public comment period was provided on the application and proposed authorization. Several comments were received during the 30-day comment period. While those comments no longer require response by NMFS, because similar comments were submitted during the review and comment period for an IHA application by Western Geophysical for seismic operations in the U.S. Beaufort Sea, readers are encouraged to review the authorization notice for that applicant elsewhere in this issue of the **Federal Register**.

Dated: July 22, 1998.

Patricia A. Montanio,

Deputy Director, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 98-20279 Filed 7-28-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-F

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

[I.D.061498A]

Taking and Importing of Marine Mammals; Offshore Seismic Activities in the Beaufort Sea

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

ACTION: Notice of issuance of an incidental harassment authorization.

SUMMARY: In accordance with provisions of the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) as amended, notification is hereby given that an Incidental Harassment Authorization (IHA) to take small numbers of bowhead whales and other marine mammals by harassment incidental to conducting seismic surveys in the Western Beaufort Sea in state and federal waters has been issued to Western Geophysical/Western Atlas International of Houston, Texas (Western Geophysical).

DATES: Effective from July 23, 1998, until November 1, 1998, unless extended.

ADDRESSES: The application, authorization, monitoring plan, environmental assessment (EA), and a list of references used in this document are available by writing to the Chief, Marine Mammal Division, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910-3225, or by telephoning one of the contacts listed here.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kenneth R. Hollingshead, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, (301) 713-2055, Brad Smith, Western Alaska Field Office, NMFS, (907) 271-5006.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**Background**

Sections 101(a)(5)(A) and (D) of the MMPA (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*) directs the Secretary of Commerce (Secretary) to allow, upon request, the incidental, but not intentional, taking 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 issued or, if the taking is limited to

harassment, a notice of a proposed authorization is provided to the public for review.

Permission may 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 subsistence uses and that the permissible methods of taking and requirements pertaining to the monitoring and reporting of such taking are set forth.

On April 10, 1996 (61 FR 15884), NMFS published an interim rule establishing, among other things, procedures for issuing incidental harassment authorizations under section 101(a)(5)(D) of the MMPA in Arctic waters. For additional information on the procedures to be followed for this authorization, please refer to that document.

Summary of Request

On April 15, 1998, NMFS received an application from Western Geophysical requesting an authorization for the harassment of small numbers of several species of marine mammals incidental to conducting seismic surveys during the open water season in the Beaufort Sea between Harrison Bay and Flaxman Island, AK. Weather permitting, the survey is expected to take place from middle- to late-July and to extend until approximately October 20, 1998.

Disturbance by seismic noise is the principal means of taking by this activity. Support vessels and aircraft will provide a secondary source of noise. The physical presence of vessels and aircraft could also lead to non-acoustic effects involving visual or other cues.

Seismic surveys are used to obtain data about formations several thousands of feet deep. The proposed seismic operation is an ocean bottom cable (OBC) survey. OBC surveys involve dropping cables from a ship to the ocean bottom, forming a patch consisting of four parallel cables 10 kilometers (km) (6.2 mi) long, separated 750 m (2,500 ft) from each other. Sensors (hydrophones and geophones) are attached to the cables. These hydrophones are used to detect seismic energy reflected back from underground rock strata. The original source of this energy is a submerged acoustic source, called a seismic airgun array, that releases compressed air into the water, creating an acoustical energy pulse that is directed downward toward the seabed. The source level planned for this project - a maximum of 249 dB re 1 μ Pa-m (27.2