

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration****Proposed Information Collection; Comment Request; Observer Programs' Information that Can Be Gathered Only Through Questions**

AGENCY: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Commerce, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on proposed and/or continuing information collections, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

DATES: Written comments must be submitted on or before May 25, 2012.

ADDRESSES: Direct all written comments to Jennifer Jessup, Departmental Paperwork Clearance Officer, Department of Commerce, Room 6616, 14th and Constitution Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20230 (or via the Internet at Jjessup@doc.gov).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information or copies of the information collection instrument and instructions should be directed to Chris Rilling, (301) 427-8168, (Chris.Rilling@noaa.gov).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**I. Abstract**

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) deploys fishery observers on United States (U.S.) commercial fishing vessels and to fish processing plants in order to collect biological and economic data. NMFS has at least one observer program in each of its six Regions. These observer programs provide the most reliable and effective method for obtaining information that is critical for the conservation and management of living marine resources. Observer programs primarily obtain information through direct observations by employees or agents of NMFS; and such observations are not subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA). However, observer programs also collect the following information that requires clearance under the PRA: (1) Standardized questions of fishing vessel captains/crew or fish processing plant managers/staff, which include gear and performance questions, safety questions, and trip costs, crew size and other

economic questions; (2) questions asked by observer program staff/contractors to plan observer deployments; (3) forms that are completed by observers and that fishing vessel captains are asked to review and sign; (4) questionnaires to evaluate observer performance; and (5) a form to certify that a fisherman is the permit holder when requesting observer data from the observer on the vessel. NMFS seeks to renew OMB PRA clearance for these information collections.

The information collected will be used to: (1) Monitor catch and bycatch in federally-managed commercial fisheries; (2) understand the population status and trends of fish stocks and protected species, as well as the interactions between them; (3) determine the quantity and distribution of net benefits derived from living marine resources; (4) predict the biological, ecological, and economic impacts of existing management action and proposed management options; and (5) ensure that the observer programs can safely and efficiently collect the information required for the previous four uses. In particular, these biological and economic data collection programs contribute to legally mandated analyses required under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA), the Endangered Species Act (ESA), the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA), the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Regulatory Flexibility Act (RFA), Executive Order 12866 (EO 12866), as well as a variety of state statutes. The confidentiality of the data will be protected as required by the MSA, Section 402(b).

II. Method of Collection

The information will be collected by (1) NMFS observers while they are deployed on a vessel to observe a particular fishing trip; questions will be asked in-person to the captain, crew and/or owner (if on board the vessel) during the course of the observed trip; (2) via mail through a follow up surveys of economic information not available during the trip; (3) via telephone or mail survey by the observer program staff or contractor planning to deploy observers; or (4) via feedback questionnaires mailed to the vessel owners or captains to evaluate observer performance.

III. Data

OMB Control Number: 0648-0593.

Form Number: None.

Type of Review: Regular submission (extension of a currently approved information collection).

Affected Public: Business or other for-profit organizations.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 20,643.

Estimated Time per Response: 51 minutes. Information will be collected for observed fishing trips and deployments to fish processing plants; therefore, there will be multiple responses for some respondents, but counted as one response per trip or plant visit.

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 26,172.

Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public: \$1,160.

IV. Request for Comments

Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden (including hours and cost) of the proposed collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for OMB approval of this information collection; they also will become a matter of public record.

Dated: March 21, 2012.

Gwellnar Banks,

Management Analyst, Office of the Chief Information Officer.

[FR Doc. 2012-7211 Filed 3-23-12; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

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

RIN 0648-XB110

Marine Mammals; File No. 17159

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

ACTION: Notice; receipt of application.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that Simon Nash, Parthenon Entertainment Ltd, 34 Whiteladies Road, Bristol, BS8 2LG, United Kingdom, has applied in due form for a permit to conduct commercial or educational photography

on spinner dolphins (*Stenella longirostris*).

DATES: Written, telefaxed, or email comments must be received on or before April 25, 2012.

ADDRESSES: These documents are also available upon written request or by appointment in the following offices:

Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway Room 13705, Silver Spring, MD 20910; phone (301) 427-8401; fax (301) 713-0376; and Pacific Islands Region, NMFS, 1601 Kapiolani Blvd., Rm. 1110, Honolulu, HI 96814-4700; phone (808) 944-2200; fax (808) 973-2941.

Written comments on this application should be submitted to the Chief, Permits and Conservation Division, at the address listed above. Comments may also be submitted by facsimile to (301) 713-0376, or by email to NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov. Please include the File No. in the subject line of the email comment.

Those individuals requesting a public hearing should submit a written request to the Chief, Permits and Conservation Division at the address listed above. The request should set forth the specific reasons why a hearing on this application would be appropriate.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Carrie Hubbard or Kristy Beard, (301) 427-8401.

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.*) and the regulations governing the taking and importing of marine mammals (50 CFR part 216).

The applicant is requesting authorization to film spinner dolphins near Midway Atoll in the Pacific Ocean. Dolphins would be approached during morning and late afternoon when they are typically active, but would not be approached during their mid-day resting period. Filming techniques include above water from a vessel, a pole-mounted underwater camera, and a waterproof camera used by a snorkeling cameraman. Up to 1,300 dolphins could be approached annually during filming activities. Footage would be used primarily for a television documentary about Hawaiian wildlife that would be aired on Animal Planet in the U.S. and elsewhere internationally. The initial filming period is scheduled for two weeks in June/July 2012. The permit would be valid for five years.

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

Dated: March 20, 2012.

Tammy C. Adams,

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

[FR Doc. 2012-7252 Filed 3-23-12; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XB107

Pacific Fishery Management Council (Pacific Council); Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice of a public meeting.

SUMMARY: The Pacific Council will convene a meeting of the Ecosystem Plan Development Team (EPDT) which is open to the public.

DATES: The EPDT will meet on Thursday, April 12, 2012 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., or when business for the day is completed.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Hilton Seattle Airport, Mercer B Room, 17620 International Boulevard, Seattle, WA 98188-4001; telephone: (206) 244-4800.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Mike Burner, Staff Officer; telephone: (503) 820-2280.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Please note, this is not a public hearing; it is a work session for the primary purpose of drafting a report and recommendations to the Council on the Development of a Fishery Ecosystem Plan (FEP). The primary purpose of the meeting is to address Council requests from and since the November 2011 Council meeting, revise and expand sections of the Council's developing Fishery Ecosystem Plan, discuss the content and format of an annual ecosystem report, explore mechanisms for incorporating ecosystem science into stock assessments, and revisit the need and mechanisms for expanding

protective measures for unexploited forage species. The EPDT may also develop recommendations for the June 2012 Council meeting.

Although non-emergency issues not contained in the meeting agenda may come before the EPDT for discussion, those issues may not be the subject of formal EPDT action during this meeting. EPDT 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 intent to take final action to address the emergency.

Special Accommodations

This meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Mr. Kris Kleinschmidt at (503) 820-2280 at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

Dated: March 21, 2012.

Tracey L. Thompson,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XB106

New England Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice; public meeting.

SUMMARY: The New England Fishery Management Council (Council) is scheduling a public meeting of its Whiting Oversight Committee on April 17, 2012 to consider actions affecting New England fisheries in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ).

Recommendations from this group will be brought to the full Council for formal consideration and action, if appropriate.

DATES: This meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 17, 2012 at 10 a.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Hotel Providence, 139 Mathewson Street, Providence, RI 02903; telephone: (401) 861-8000; fax: (401) 454-4306.

Council address: New England Fishery Management Council, 50 Water Street, Mill 2, Newburyport, MA 01950.