



Billing Code: 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XS35

Marine Mammals; File No. 14450

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

ACTION: Notice; issuance of permit.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that a permit has been issued to the National Marine Fisheries Service's Southeast Fisheries Science Center (SEFSC), 75 Virginia Beach Drive, Miami, Florida 33149 [Principal Investigator: Dr. Keith Mullin] to conduct research on marine mammals.

ADDRESSES: The permit and related documents are available for review 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;

Northeast Region, NMFS, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930; phone (978) 281-9328; fax (978) 281-9394; and

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

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kristy Beard, (301) 427-8401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On October 19, 2009, notice was published in the Federal Register (74 FR 53467) that a request for a permit to conduct research on all cetacean species that occur in U.S. and international waters of the Atlantic Ocean, Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean Sea had been submitted by the above-named applicant. 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.), 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 parts 222-226).

The permit authorizes takes by harassment during aerial and vessel-based line-transect sampling, acoustic sampling, behavioral observations, and vessel-based photo-identification and biopsy sampling. Tissue samples collected in other countries may be imported into the U.S. The permit is valid for five years from the date of issuance.

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), a final determination has been made that the activity proposed is categorically excluded from the requirement to prepare an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement.

As required by the ESA, issuance of this permit was based on a finding that such permit:

(1) was applied for in good faith; (2) will not operate to the disadvantage of such endangered species; and (3) is consistent with the purposes and policies set forth in section 2 of the ESA.

Dated: March 4, 2014.

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Perry F. Gayaldo,

Acting Deputy Director, Office of Protected Resources,

National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 2014-05014 Filed 03/06/2014 at 8:45 am; Publication Date: 03/07/2014]