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## BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

### DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

#### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648-XA074]

#### Marine Mammals; File No. 23310

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

**ACTION:** Notice; receipt of application.

**SUMMARY:** Notice is hereby given that Patricia Fair, Ph.D., South Carolina Aquarium, 100 Aquarium Wharf, Charleston, SC 29401, has applied in due form for a permit to conduct research on bottlenose dolphins (*Tursiops truncatus*).

**DATES:** Written, telefaxed, or e-mail comments must be received on or before

**[INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].**

**ADDRESSES:** The application and related documents are available for review by selecting “Records Open for Public Comment” from the “Features” box on the Applications and Permits for Protected Species (APPS) home page, <https://apps.nmfs.noaa.gov>, and then selecting File No. 23310 from the list of available applications.

These documents are also available upon written request or by appointment in the 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.

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 Jordan Rutland, (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 proposes to compare stressors on bottlenose dolphins in two different estuarine habitats: the urbanized Charleston, SC area and the more pristine May River, SC area. Researchers would use biopsy sampling, combined with photo-identification data, to examine stress biomarkers, hormones, proteomics, lipidomics and contaminants. Up to 72 dolphins may be biopsy sampled at each study site annually. An additional 5000 animals may be harassed and photographed annually during vessel surveys. 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 9, 2020.

**Amy Sloan,**

*Acting Chief, Permits and Conservation Division,*

*Office of Protected Resources,*

*National Marine Fisheries Service.*

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