



BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648-XA106]

Marine Mammals; File No. 23078

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

ACTION: Notice; receipt of application.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that Marilyn Mazzoil, Dolphin Census Inc., 9611 U.S. Highway 1, #382, Sebastian, FL 32958, 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. 23078 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.PrIComments@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 Hubard or Shasta McClenahan, (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 study bottlenose dolphins in the inland waters, nearshore coastal waterways, and offshore waters of Southern Georgia and Florida's east coast. Up to 15,000 dolphins may be harassed annually during vessel surveys, unmanned aircraft flights, photo-identification, photogrammetry, and behavioral observations. Annually, 120 dolphins may be breath sampled using a pole and 156 dolphins may be biopsy sampled. The objectives of the research are to: (1) understand stock structure and behavior, (2) estimate population trajectory, (3) evaluate health and nutrition, (4) increase knowledge of the role of an apex predator in ecological function and (5) identify and mitigate direct human threats. 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: April 3, 2020.

Julia Marie Harrison,
Chief, Permits and Conservation Division,
Office of Protected Resources,
National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 2020-07598 Filed: 4/9/2020 8:45 am; Publication Date: 4/10/2020]