

Notices

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This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains documents other than rules or proposed rules that are applicable to the public. Notices of hearings and investigations, committee meetings, agency decisions and rulings, delegations of authority, filing of petitions and applications and agency statements of organization and functions are examples of documents appearing in this section.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Evaluation of Coastal Zone Management Program and National Estuarine Research Reserves

AGENCY: Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management, National Ocean Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), DOC.

ACTION: Notice of intent to evaluate.

SUMMARY: The NOAA Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management (OCRM) announces its intent to evaluate the performance of Washington, Mississippi, and California Coastal Zone Management Programs and the Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve in Florida.

These evaluations will be conducted pursuant to section 312 of the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (CZMA), as amended. The CZMA requires a continuing review of the performance of states with respect to coastal program implementation. Evaluation of Coastal Zone Management programs and National Estuarine Research Reserves requires findings concerning the extent to which a state has met the national objectives, adhered to its coastal program document or reserve management plan approved by the Secretary of Commerce, and adhered to the terms of financial assistance awards funded under the CZMA. The evaluations will include a site visit, consideration of public comments, and consultations with interested Federal, State, and local agencies and members of the public. Public meetings are held as part of the site visits.

Notice is hereby given of the dates of the site visits for the listed evaluations, and the dates, local times, and locations of public meetings during the site visits.

The Washington Coastal Zone Management Program site visit will be from November 18–22, 1996. A public meeting will be held on Thursday, November 21, 1996, at 7:00 P.M., at the Department of Ecology, 300 Desmond Drive, Olympia, WA.

The Mississippi Coastal Zone Management Program site visit will be from December 2–6, 1996. A public meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 4, 1996, at 7:00 P.M., at the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources, Conference Room, 152 Gateway Drive, Biloxi, Mississippi, 39531.

The Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve in Florida site visit will be from December 9–13, 1996. A public meeting will be on Wednesday, December 11, 1996, at 7:00 P.M., at the Rookery Bay Headquarters Building, 300 Tower Road, Main Meeting Room, Naples, Florida, 33962.

The California Coastal Management Program site visit will be from December 2–12, 1996. Public meetings will be held on Wednesday, December 4, 1996 from 5:00–7:00 p.m. at the Port Commission Room, Ferry Building, Suite 3100 at the foot of Market Street in San Francisco, California, and on Monday, December 9, 1996 from 5:00–7:00 p.m. at the Ventura City Hall, Community Meeting Room, 501 Poli Street, Ventura, California.

The States will issue notice of the public meeting(s) in a local newspaper(s) at least 45 days prior to the public meeting(s), and will issue other timely notices as appropriate.

Copies of the State's most recent performance reports, as well as OCRM's notifications and supplemental request letters to the States, are available upon request from OCRM. Written comments from interested parties regarding these Programs are encouraged and will be accepted until 15 days after the public meeting. Please direct written comments to Vickie A. Allin, Chief, Policy Coordination Division, Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management, NOS/NOAA, 1305 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, Maryland, 20910. When the evaluation is completed, OCRM will place a notice in the Federal Register announcing the availability of the Final Evaluation Findings.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Vickie A. Allin, Chief, Policy Coordination Division, Office of Ocean

and Coastal Resource Management, NOS/NOAA, 1305 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, Maryland, 20910, (301) 713–3090, ext. 126.

Federal Domestic Assistance Catalog 11.419 Coastal Zone Management Program Administration.

Dated: October 16, 1996.

W. Stanley Wilson,

Assistant Administrator for Ocean Services and Coastal Zone.

[FR Doc. 96–27127 Filed 10–22–96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–08–M

[I.D. 101196A]

Incidental Take of Marine Mammals; Bottlenose Dolphins and Spotted Dolphins

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

ACTION: Notice of issuance of letter of authorization.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) as amended, and implementing regulations, notification is hereby given that letters of authorization to take bottlenose and spotted dolphins incidental to oil and gas structure removal activities were issued on this date to Unocal Corporation, 4021–4023 Ambassador Caffery Parkway, Lafayette, Louisiana 70503 and to Burlington Resources, 400 N. Sam Houston Parkway, Houston, Texas 77060.

EFFECTIVE DATE: The letter of authorization is effective from October 11, 1996, through October 11, 1997.

ADDRESSES: The application and letter are available for review in the following offices: Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910 and the Southeast Region, NMFS, 9721 Executive Center Drive N, St. Petersburg, FL 33702.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kenneth R. Hollingshead, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, (301) 713–2055 or Charles Oravetz, Southeast Region (813) 570–5312.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 101(a)(5)(A) of the MMPA (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*) directs NMFS to allow, on request, the incidental, but not intentional, taking of small numbers 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 regulations are issued. Under the MMPA, the term "taking" means to harass, hunt, capture, or kill or to attempt to harass, hunt, capture or kill marine mammals.

Permission may be granted for periods up to 5 years if NMFS finds, after notification and opportunity for public comment, that the taking will have a negligible impact on the species or stock(s) of marine mammals and will not have an unmitigable adverse impact on the availability of the species or stock(s) for subsistence uses. In addition, NMFS must prescribe regulations that include permissible methods of taking and other means effecting the least practicable adverse impact on the species and its habitat, and on the availability of the species for subsistence uses, paying particular attention to rookeries, mating grounds and areas of similar significance. The regulations must include requirements pertaining to the monitoring and reporting of such taking. Regulations governing the taking of bottlenose and spotted dolphins incidental to oil and gas structure removal activities in the Gulf of Mexico were published on October 12, 1995 (60 FR 53139) and remain in effect until November 13, 2000.

Summary of Request

NMFS received requests for letters of authorization on September 30, 1996, from Unocal Corporation and on October 4, 1996, from Burlington Resources. These letters requested a take by harassment of a small number of bottlenose and spotted dolphins incidental to the described activity. Issuance of these letters of authorization are based on a finding that the total takings will have a negligible impact on the bottlenose and spotted dolphin stocks of the Gulf of Mexico.

Dated: October 16, 1996.

Patricia Montanio,

*Acting Director, Office of Protected Resources,
National Marine Fisheries Service.*

[FR Doc. 96-27079 Filed 10-22-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-F

[I.D. 101596B]

Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council; Public Meetings

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

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council will convene public meetings.

DATES: The meetings will be held on November 11-15, 1996.

ADDRESSES: These meetings will be held at the Marriott's Grand Hotel, U.S. Highway 98, Point Clear, AL; telephone: (334) 928-9201.

Council address: Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, 5401 West Kennedy Boulevard, Suite 331, Tampa, FL 33609.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Wayne E. Swingle, Executive Director; telephone: (813) 228-2815.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Council

November 13

8:30 a.m.—Convene.

9:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.—Receive public testimony on Reef Fish Total Allowable Catch (TAC) and Draft Shrimp Amendment 9.

November 14

8:30 a.m. - 12:00 noon—Continue receiving public testimony on Draft Shrimp Amendment 9.

1:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.—Reconvene to receive a report of the Shrimp Management Committee.

4:30 p.m. - 4:45 p.m.—Receive a report of the Budget Committee.

4:45 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.—Receive a report of the Stone Crab Management Committee.

November 15

8:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.—Receive a report of the Reef Fish Management Committee.

10:00 a.m. - 10:15 a.m.—Receive a report of the Habitat Protection Committee.

10:15 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.—Receive a report of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas Advisory Committee.

10:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.—Receive a report of Magnuson Act Amendments.

11:00 a.m. - 11:15 a.m.—Receive Enforcement Report.

11:15 a.m. - 11:40 a.m.—Receive Director's Reports.

11:40 a.m. - 12:00 noon—Other business to be discussed.

Committees

November 11

10:30 a.m. - 11:15 a.m.—Convene the Budget Committee.

11:15 a.m. - 12:00 noon—Convene the Stone Crab Management Committee.

1:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.—Convene the Reef Fish Management Committee. The committees will hear stock assessment reports for red snapper, vermilion snapper, and amberjack. They will

review the recommendations of a scientific stock assessment panel and socioeconomic panel on acceptable biological catch (ABC) and on TAC for these stocks as well as the recommendations of the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) and Red Snapper Advisory Panel. The committee will develop its recommendations to the Council on TAC, bag limits, and commercial quotas for red snapper and vermilion snapper, and management actions for the other stocks.

November 12

8:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.—Convene the Habitat Protection Committee.

9:30 a.m. - 12:00 noon and 1:00 p.m.

- 5 p.m.—Convene the Shrimp Management Committee. This committee will review summaries of the public comments, obtained from the 14 public hearings held in October, on the bycatch amendment. It will also review the recommendations of the Shrimp Advisory Panel and the SSC on the amendment and will develop its recommendations to the Council on the rules that shall be adopted. The alternatives for rules are as follows:

- Require the installation of a NMFS-certified Bycatch Reduction Device (BRD) in all nets used aboard vessels trawling for shrimp in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) of the Gulf of Mexico, except for a single test or "try" net not exceeding 16 feet in headrope length. Vessels with trawls for groundfish or butterfish and those trawling for royal red shrimp beyond the 100-fathom contour depth are exempted.

- Require the installation of a NMFS-certified BRD in shrimp trawls in the EEZ of the Gulf of Mexico within the 100-fathom contour depth.

- Require the installation of a NMFS-certified BRD in shrimp trawls in the EEZ of the Gulf of Mexico within the 100-fathom contour depth west of Cape San Blas, FL.

- Require the installation of a NMFS-certified BRD in shrimp trawls in the EEZ of the Gulf of Mexico between the 10- and 100-fathom contour depth.

- Require the installation of a NMFS-certified BRD in shrimp trawls in the EEZ of the Gulf of Mexico between the 10- and 100-fathom contour depth and west of Cape San Blas, FL.

- Establish the following bycatch reduction criteria for a BRD to be certified: It must reduce the bycatch of juvenile red snapper (age 0 and age 1) by 50 percent from the average level of mortality on those age groups during the years 1984-89.

- Establish a framework procedure for modifying the bycatch reduction criteria.