

circle with a radius of 250 m (820 ft); for 20Log(R), the zone of influence would be 1,000 m. Based solely on estimated marine mammal populations within the survey area and on the number of individuals that were observed during the 1998 USGS survey and not on the expected number of animals that may be harassed by the GI-gun and Hunttec system, the USGS estimates that up to 5 killer whales, 10 minke whales, 50 northern sea lions, 100 northern fur seals, 100 northern elephant seals, 100 Dall's porpoise, 100 Risso's dolphins, 100 northern right-whale dolphins, 100 Pacific white-sided dolphins, 100 bottlenosed dolphins, 200 California sea lions, 200 Pacific harbor seals, and 6,000 common dolphins may be harassed incidental to the USGS survey. No mysticetes (except possibly minke whales) or sperm whales are expected to be in the area at the time of the survey and, therefore, would not be subject to incidental harassment, and no marine mammals will be seriously injured or killed as a result of the seismic survey. In addition, because the Hunttec system will be towed near the seabottom and because the attenuation of mid-frequency sources is greater than low frequency sources, it is likely that few to no marine mammals at or near the surface will be affected by this acoustic instrument.

Mitigation of Potential Environmental Impact

To avoid potential TTS injury to marine mammals, a safety zone will be established and monitored continuously by biologists, and the USGS must shut off the airguns whenever the ship and a marine mammal converge closer than 100 m (328 ft). However, because no authorization was requested to incidentally harass mysticetes (except minke whales) or sperm whales (since they're not expected to be in the area), a safety zone of 250 m (820 ft) will need to be monitored for these species.

The USGS plans to have marine biologists aboard the ship who will have the authority to stop airgun operations when a mammal enters the safety zone.

During seismic-reflection surveying, the ship's speed will be only 4 to 5 knots, so that, when the airgun is being discharged, nearby marine mammals will have gradual warning of the vessel's approach and can move away. Finally, NMFS will coordinate with the local stranding network during the time of the survey to determine whether strandings can be related to the seismic operation.

Additionally, in accordance with the May 28, 1999, request from the USGS, airgun activities will not be conducted

during nighttime. This will decrease the potential that a marine mammal might enter the safety zone undetected.

Monitoring and Reporting

Biologists, affiliated with the Cascadia Research Collective in Olympia, Washington, will monitor marine mammals at all times while the airguns are active. Three trained marine mammal observers will be aboard the seismic vessel to mitigate the potential environmental impact from airgun use and to gather data on the species, number, and reaction of marine mammals to the airgun. To ensure that no marine mammals are within the safety zone, monitoring will begin no later than 30 minutes prior to the acoustic sources being turned on. Each observer will work shifts that limit on-watch times to no more than 4 consecutive hours. Observers will use 7x50 binoculars with internal compasses and reticules to record the horizontal and vertical angle to sighted mammals. Monitoring data to be recorded during airgun operations include the observer on duty and weather conditions (such as Beaufort sea state, wind speed, cloud cover, swell height, precipitation, and visibility). For each mammal sighting, the observer will record the time, bearing and reticule readings, species, group size, and the animal's surface behavior and orientation. Observers will instruct geologists to shut off the airgun array whenever a marine mammal enters its respective safety zone.

Consultation

Under section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, NMFS has completed consultation on the issuance of an IHA. NMFS finds this action to be unlikely to adversely affect listed marine mammals because the endangered whales are expected to be in offshore waters outside the Channel Islands at the time of the year that the activity will take place and northern sea lions, which are expected to be in more northerly waters during the summer, are not known to be affected by low frequency seismic sources unless close to the source.

Conclusions

NMFS has determined that the short-term impact of conducting marine seismic-reflection data in offshore southern California may result, at worst, in a temporary modification in behavior by certain species of pinnipeds and cetaceans. While behavioral modifications may be made by certain species of marine mammals to avoid the resultant noise from the seismic airgun, this behavioral change is expected to

have no more than a negligible impact on the animals.

In addition, no take by serious injury or death is anticipated, and takes will be at the lowest level practicable due to the incorporation of the mitigation measures previously mentioned. No known rookeries, mating grounds, areas of concentrated feeding, or other areas of special significance for marine mammals occur within or near the planned area of operations during the season of operations.

Since NMFS is assured that the taking would not result in more than the incidental harassment (as defined by the MMPA) of small numbers of certain species of marine mammals, would have only a negligible impact on these stocks, and would result in the least practicable impact on the stocks, NMFS has determined that the requirements of section 101(a)(5)(D) of the MMPA have been met and the authorization can be issued.

Authorization

Accordingly, NMFS has issued an IHA to the USGS for the possible harassment of small numbers of several species of marine mammals incidental to collecting marine seismic-reflection data offshore from southern California during the period from June 3 through July 31, provided the mitigation, monitoring and reporting requirements described in the authorization are undertaken.

Dated: June 3, 1999.

Hilda Diaz-Soltero,

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

[FR Doc. 99-14902 Filed 6-10-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-F

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Department of the Air Force

Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for Peacekeeper Missile System Deactivation/ Dismantlement at F.E. Warren Air Force Base, Wyoming

The United States Air Force Space Command is issuing this notice to advise the public that the Air Force intends to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to assess the potential environmental impacts of deactivation/dismantlement of the Peacekeeper Missile System of the 90th Space Wing based at F. E. Warren Air Force Base in Cheyenne, Wyoming. The EIS will also evaluate the potential impacts of sustainment of the current system which is the No Action

Alternative. The Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty II (START II) requires deactivation of the Peacekeeper Missile System. Deactivation will only occur if the Treaty is ratified by Russia and entered into force. As modified by the Helsinki Agreement, the Treaty requires complete dismantlement by December

31, 2007. In order to meet the Treaty deadline, deactivation could start as early as October 2000.

Public scoping meetings are planned in the towns of Cheyenne, Wheatland, and Torrington, Wyoming. The purpose of these meetings is to determine the scope of issues to be addressed and to

help identify significant environmental issues to be analyzed in depth. Notice of the times and locations of the meetings will be made available to the community using the local news media. The schedule for the scoping meetings is as follows:

Date	Location	Time
June 28, 1999	East High School, 2800 E. Pershing Blvd., Cheyenne, WY ...	6:30–9:30 p.m.
June 29, 1999	Wheatland High School, 1207 13th Street, Wheatland, WY ...	6:30–9:30 p.m.
June 30, 1999	Torrington High School, 23rd Ave & West C, Torrington, WY	6:30–9:30 p.m.

In addition to seeking public input on environmental issues and concerns at the scoping meetings, the Air Force is soliciting written comments regarding the EIS scope. To ensure the Air Force will have sufficient time to fully consider public inputs on issues, written comments should be mailed for receipt no later than August 2, 1999.

Please direct written comments or requests for further information concerning the Peacekeeper system deactivation/dismantlement EIS to: Mr. Jonathan D. Farthing, HQ AFCEE/ECA 3207 North Road, Brooks AFB, TX 78235–5363, (210) 536–3787.

Janet A. Long,

Air Force Federal Register Liaison Officer.

[FR Doc. 99–14847 Filed 6–10–99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 5001–05–U

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Office of Arms Control and Nonproliferation Policy; Proposed Subsequent Arrangement

AGENCY: Department of Energy.

ACTION: Subsequent arrangement.

SUMMARY: The Department is providing notice of a proposed “subsequent arrangement” under the Agreement for Cooperation Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of Canada Concerning the Civil Uses of Atomic Energy and the Agreement for Cooperation Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Korea Concerning Civil Uses of Atomic Energy. This notice is being issued under the authority of Section 131 of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended (42 U.S.C. 2160).

The subsequent arrangement RTD/CA(KO)–1 concerns the return of 8,431 grams of CANFLEX Fuel Bundle of which 6,747 grams consists of 111.7 grams of the isotope U–235 (1.64 percent enrichment) and the remaining 1,684 grams consists of 33.3 grams of

the isotope U–235 (1.98 percent enrichment). Included in this return is 5,153 grams of enriched sintered UO₂ pellets of which 3,965 grams consists of 65 grams of the isotope U–235 (1.64 percent enrichment) and the remaining 1,188 grams consists of 23.5 grams of the isotope U–235 (1.98 percent enrichment). The material is being returned to Canada from the Republic of Korea to be irradiated for performance test in NRU reactor in Canada as part of a Joint Canada/Korea fuel development program. This will be the first of a series of returns to Canada until the total amount of material originally transferred to the Republic of Korea to be incorporated into CANFLEX fuel bundles is returned to AECL. The original retransfer was implemented September 1998 and is documented as RTD/KO(CA)–7.

In accordance with Section 131 of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, we have determined that this subsequent arrangement will not be inimical to the common defense and security.

This subsequent arrangement will take effect no sooner than June 28, 1999.

Dated: June 7, 1999.

For the Department of Energy.

Edward T. Fei,

Deputy Director, International Policy and Analysis Division, Office of Arms Control and Nonproliferation.

[FR Doc. 99–14883 Filed 6–10–99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6450–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Floodplain and Wetlands Involvement; Geologic Repository for the Disposal of Spent Nuclear Fuel and High-Level Radioactive Waste at Yucca Mountain, Nye County, Nevada

AGENCY: Department of Energy.

ACTION: Notice of floodplain and wetlands involvement.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is proposing to construct, operate and monitor, and eventually close a geologic repository for the disposal of spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste at Yucca Mountain, Nye County, Nevada. As part of its proposal, DOE is considering shipping spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste in the State of Nevada over a rail line that would be constructed or over an existing highway route that may need upgrading to accommodate heavy-haul trucks. Portions of the rail corridor or highway route would cross perennial and ephemeral streams and their associated floodplains, as well as possible wetlands. Furthermore, portions of the transportation system in the immediate vicinity of the proposed repository would be located within the 100-year floodplains of Midway Valley Wash, Drillhole Wash, Busted Butte Wash and/or Fortymile Wash. No other aspect of repository-related operations or nuclear or nonnuclear repository facilities would be located within the 500-year or 100-year floodplains of these washes. In accordance with DOE regulations for Compliance with Floodplain/Wetlands Environmental Review Requirements (10 CFR Part 1022), DOE will prepare a floodplain and wetlands assessment commensurate with proposed decisions and available information. The assessment will be included in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for a Geologic Repository for the Disposal of Spent Nuclear Fuel and High-Level Radioactive Waste at Yucca Mountain, Nye County, Nevada. A draft of this EIS is scheduled to be published during the summer of 1999.

DATES: The public is invited to comment on this notice on or before July 1, 1999. Comments received after this date will be considered to the extent practicable.

ADDRESSES: Comments on this notice should be addressed to Ms. Wendy Dixon, EIS Project Manager, Yucca Mountain Site Characterization Office,