

implementations and other supported key-block size combinations (particularly those required in the "Minimum Acceptability Requirements" section) during Round 2 analysis.

Computational efficiency essentially refers to the speed of the algorithm. NIST's analysis of computational efficiency will be made using each submission's mathematically optimized implementations on the platform specified under "Round 1 Technical Evaluation" below. Public comments on each algorithm's efficiency (particularly for various platforms and applications) will also be taken into consideration by NIST.

iii. Memory requirements: The memory required to implement a candidate algorithm—for both hardware and software implementations of the algorithm—will also be considered during the evaluation process. Round 1 analysis by NIST will focus primarily on software implementations; more attention will be paid to hardware implementations during Round 2.

Memory requirements will include such factors as gate counts for hardware implementations, and code size and RAM requirements for software implementations.

Testing will be performed by NIST using the mathematically optimized implementations provided in the submission package. Memory requirement estimates (for different platforms and environments) that are included in the submission package will also be taken into consideration by NIST. Input from public evaluations of each algorithm's memory requirements (particularly for various platforms and applicants) will also be taken into consideration by NIST.

#### Algorithm and Implementation Characteristics

i. Flexibility: Candidate algorithms with greater flexibility will meet the needs of more users than less flexible ones, and, therefore, *inter alia*, are preferable. However, some extremes of functionality are of little practical application (e.g., extremely short key lengths)—for those cases, preference will not be given.

Some examples of "flexibility" may include (but are not limited to) the following:

a. The algorithm can accommodate additional key- and block-sizes (e.g., 64-bit block sizes, key sizes other than those specified in the Minimum Acceptability Requirements section, [e.g., keys between 128 and 256 that are multiples of 32 bits, etc.]).

b. The algorithm can be implemented securely and efficiently in a wide variety of platforms and applications (e.g., 8-bit processors, ATM networks, voice & satellite communications, HDTV, B-ISDN, etc.).

c. The algorithm can be implemented as a stream cipher, Message Authentication Code (MAC) generator, pseudo-random number generator, hashing algorithm, etc.

ii. Hardware and software suitability: A candidate algorithm shall not be restrictive in the sense that it can only be implemented in hardware. If one can also implement the algorithm efficiently in firmware, then this will be an advantage in the area of flexibility.

iii. Simplicity: A candidate algorithm shall be judged according to relative simplicity of design.

[End of excerpt]

### 5. Initial Planning for the Third AES Candidate Conference (AES3)

Near the end of Round 2, NIST will sponsor the Third AES Candidate Conference (AES3)—another open, public forum that will be used to discuss analyses of the AES finalists. Additionally, submitters of the AES finalists will be invited to attend and engage in discussions regarding comments on their algorithms.

AES3 will be held April 13–14, 2000, at the Hilton New York and Towers, in New York City. The AES home page contains registration and logistical information, in addition to information on other nearby hotels. As for AES2 (March 22–23, 1999), AES3 will be held during the same week and at the same location as the Fast Software Encryption (FSE) Workshop (a link to FSE information will be available on the AES home page).

Paper submissions for AES3 should be sent to [AESround2@nist.gov](mailto:AESround2@nist.gov) as an official comment, with a note indicating that the paper is being submitted for AES3. The deadline for AES3 submissions is January 15, 2000. All papers must be submitted in one of the following formats: Adobe PDF, Postscript, Rich Text Format (RTF), or Microsoft Word97. (For Adobe PDF and Postscript submissions, please embed all necessary fonts within the document.) All papers received for AES3—regardless of their acceptance for presentation at AES3—will be made available on the AES home page prior to the conference.

### Appreciation

NIST extends its appreciation to *all* AES candidate algorithm submitters—both those submitters whose algorithms did and did not qualify for Round 2—and those people providing public comments during the AES development process.

Dated: September 9, 1999.

**Karen Brown,**

*Deputy Director, NIST.*

[FR Doc. 99–24014 Filed 9–14–99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-CN-M'

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

#### National Marine Sanctuary Program

**AGENCY:** Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management (OCRM), National Ocean Service (NOS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric

Administration (NOAA), Department of Commerce (DOC).

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** NOAA is withdrawing the Northwest Straits from consideration as an Active Candidate for designation as a National Marine Sanctuary. The Northwest Straits are located north of Puget Sound, and encompass marine waters surrounding the San Juan Islands, north to the Canadian border, U.S. waters west to the entrance of the Strait of Juan de Fuca, Haro and Rosario Straits and the lower portion of the Strait of Georgia. The Northwest Straits site was identified by NOAA for evaluation as a national marine sanctuary by being listed on the National Marine Sanctuary Program's Site Evaluation List (SEL) in 1983 (as "Washington State Nearshore"). Congress directed NOAA to prepare a designation prospectus on Northwest Straits in 1988 and the site became an Active Candidate. For reasons related to designation guidance contained in the 1996 reauthorization of the National Marine Sanctuary Act (NMSA), the findings of a Congressionally-convened Northwest Straits Citizens Advisory Commission, and limited agency resources, NOAA is discontinuing consideration of the site for possible designation as a national marine sanctuary.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Debra Malek, NOAA Marine Sanctuaries Division, 1305 East-West Highway, N/ORM2, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910 or at (301) 713-3141 Ext. 162.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### I. Background

The NMSA (16 U.S.C. 1431 *et seq.*) authorizes the Secretary of Commerce to designate discrete areas of the marine environment as national marine sanctuaries to fulfill the purposes and policies of the NMSA (set forth in section 301(b) (16 U.S.C. 1431(b)), and if: (1) the area proposed for designation is of special national significance due to its resource or human-use values; (2) existing state and federal authorities are inadequate or should be supplemented to ensure coordinated and comprehensive conversation and management of the area, including resource protection, scientific research, and public education; (3) designation of the area as a national marine sanctuary will facilitate the coordinated and comprehensive conservation and management of the area; and (4) the area is of a size and nature that will permit comprehensive and coordinated conservation and management (16

U.S.C. 1433(a)). The NMSA is administered by NOAA through the Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management of the National Ocean Service.

## II. Administrative History

In January 1982, NOAA published a Program Development Plan (PDP) for the National Marine Sanctuary Program (NMSP), describing the Program's mission and goals, site identification and selection criteria, and the nomination and designation process. Based on the PDP and Program regulations, NOAA published a proposed SEL recommended to NOAA by regional resource evaluation teams. On August 4, 1983, NOAA published the final SEL (48 FR 35568). The SEL is described in the regulations for the National Marine Sanctuary Program at 15 CFR 922.10.

The Northwest Straits appeared on the SEL in 1983 as "Washington state Nearshore" (48 FR 35568). It was made an Active Candidate under the name of Northern Puget Sound by the 1988 reauthorization of the Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act of 1972 (Pub. L. No. 100-627 section 205) (54 FR 41481). This notice expanded the study area beyond that initially recognized in the SEL. A Discussion Paper presenting the rationale for a federal Sanctuary entirely in state waters, a description of some of the threats to the marine resources, and suggestions for ways in which the Sanctuary could address those threats was drafted for public review in 1993. NOAA, in conjunction with the State Department of Ecology, held 24 focus group meetings throughout the study area in March 1995 to ensure accurate information was considered for developing a Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Management Plan (DEIS/MP). Three public focus group meetings were held in May 1995, followed by two workshops in summer 1995 dedicated to discussing issues of education and research within the proposed sanctuary.

Throughout Fiscal Year 1996, NOAA worked with the State Department of Ecology to synthesize information gathered during the 1995 meetings and workshops, in anticipation of releasing a DEIS/MP, which was not completed. The 1996 reauthorization of the NMSA and subsequent Congressional instructions gave NOAA specific guidance as to the designation process for the proposed Northwest Straits NMS. Section 10 of Public Law 104-283 provided that, "No designation of an area in the Northwest Straits in the State of Washington as a national marine

sanctuary under the National Marine Sanctuaries Act shall take effect unless that designation is specifically authorized by a law enacted after the date of enactment of this Act." Accompanying statements by Senator Murray and Representative Metcalf resulted in the formation of an independent Citizen's Advisory Commission (CAC) comprised of 15 members representing local governments, tribes, users, ports, and environmentalists, and two facilitators. The statements instructed NOAA to act as "technical advisors" to the CAC and to include recommendations from the CAC in any decision document regarding the Northwest Straits.

The CAC initiated meetings in May 1997, and completed a final report in August 1998. In reaching a consensus on how best to address protection in the region, the CAC recommended the creation of a federally-funded regional, voluntary program for the seven counties adjacent to the waters of the Northwest Straits. The CAC did not recommend that a National Marine Sanctuary be established or considered further and explicitly proposed that no new regulatory authority be created or introduced.

## III. Action

In consideration of the designation guidance in the 1996 NMSA reauthorization; the direction from Senator Murray and Representative Metcalf that NOAA consider recommendations put forward by local committees or commissions; the CAC's failure to recommend designation or further consideration of a national marine sanctuary for the Northwest Straits; the CAC's recommendation that no new regulatory authority be introduced for management and protection of the resources of the Northwest Straits at this time; and limited agency personnel and budgetary resources (which the NMSP has determined are necessary to devote to existing rather than new sites at this time), NOAA is withdrawing the site from Active Candidate status. Further consideration of the Northwest Straits for designation as a National Marine Sanctuary is discontinued.

NOAA will publish a final report of findings and recommendations to provide a tool to assist ongoing or new efforts for marine resource protection in the Northwest Straits. The report and additional materials and information about the Northwest Straits will be maintained at the NOAA Seattle Regional Library located at 7600 Sand Point Way NE, Seattle, Washington. In addition, the Northwest Straits web site

will include a downloadable version of the final report, and links to other relevant information. The web site address is <http://www.nwsnms.noaa.gov/> and will be on-line in October 1999.

(Federal Domestic Assistance Catalog Number 11.429 Marine Sanctuary Program)

Dated: September 10, 1999.

**Ted I. Lillestolen,**

*Deputy Assistant Administrator for Ocean Services and Coastal Zone Management.*

[FR Doc. 99-24093 Filed 9-14-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-08-M

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

#### Modernization Transition Committee

**ACTION:** Notice of public meeting.

**TIME AND DATE:** September 28-29, 1999, beginning at 8 a.m. each day.

**PLACE:** National Interagency Fire Center, 3833 S. Development Avenue, Boise, Idaho 83705-5354.

**STATUS:** The meeting will be open to the public. On September 28, the time between 9:45 a.m. and 10:15 a.m. will be set aside for public comments regarding the proposed certifications of the Los Angeles (aviation), Redding, and Riverside, California, offices; the time between 1:15 p.m. and 1:45 p.m. will be set aside for public comments regarding the proposed certifications of the Fort Smith, Arkansas, office; and the time between 3 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. will be set aside for public comments regarding the Evansville, Indiana, office. On September 29, the time between 10:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. will be set aside for public comments regarding the proposed certifications of the Huntsville, Alabama, office. Approximately 50 seats will be available to the public on a first-come first-served basis.

**MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED:** On September 28, consultation on the proposed closure of the Olympia and Wenatchee, Washington, and Salem, Oregon, fire weather offices, the Los Angeles (aviation), Redding, and Riverside, California, weather offices, and the Fort Smith, Arkansas, weather office; and consultation on the Evansville Area Action Plan. On September 29, consultation on the proposed closure of the Huntsville, Alabama, office and review of the remaining National Weather Service (NWS) offices proposed for modernization.