

document, and may take final action with a recommendation that the regulatory amendment document be finalized and transmitted to NMFS for review and approval.

3. Consideration of Longline Gear Side-Setting as an Option (action item)
In November 2000, the USFWS issued a BiOp which contained reasonable and prudent measures for minimizing interactions with the endangered shorttail albatross. The BiOp recognized that the Hawaii-based longline fishery at that time comprised two segments, namely a deep-setting tuna-targeting segment, and a shallow-setting swordfish targeting segment. All longline vessels fishing above 23° N' lat. were required to use thawed blue dyed bait and employ strategic offal discards when setting and hauling the longline. Vessels setting deep to catch tuna were also required to use a line setting machine with weighted branch lines. Vessels setting shallow to target swordfish were required to begin setting the longline at least 1 hour after local sunset and complete the setting process by local sunrise, using only the minimum vessel lights necessary. The Council recommended a regulatory amendment to require these measures and a final rule was published in May 2002. However, the final rule did not include a requirement for night setting due to an earlier closure of the swordfish segment of the Hawaii-based fishery in early 2001, under separate rule making in compliance with a March 2001, BiOp issued by NMFS regarding sea turtles. The Council recently completed a regulatory that re-opened the swordfish-targeting segment of the Hawaii longline fishery in April 2004, which included the night setting requirement. During 2002 and 2003, additional seabird mitigation research field tests were conducted with underwater setting chutes, blue dyed bait and side setting. Side setting, as the term implies, means setting the longline from the side, rather than from the stern of the vessel. While all measures worked well, side setting was the only method which virtually reduced the interaction rate between longline and seabirds to zero. However, side setting is not included within the suite of measures required in the USFWS BiOp, nor in the regulations for the Hawaii-based fishery. At its 122nd meeting, the Council, discussed the potential for amending its requirements for seabird mitigation above 23° N' lat. to include side setting, an underwater setting chute or towed deterrent as measures that fishermen may elect to use in place of blue dyed bait, strategic offal discards and night setting. The Council directed

the staff to prepare a regulatory amendment to the Pelagics FMP that examines a range of alternatives for seabird mitigation which included the choices for longline fishermen of either the use of side setting, use of an underwater setting chute, or other acceptable measures. At its 123rd meeting, the Council may take initial action to select a preferred alternative and direct staff to complete a regulatory amendment in order to take final action at its next meeting.

4. Preliminary CNMI Bottomfish Management Options (initial action)

A public hearing will be held to solicit comments on preliminary alternatives to manage the bottomfish fishery around the CNMI. Based on comments received during public scoping meetings held in CNMI, the Council developed preliminary options including limiting the harvest of bottomfish, reporting requirements, establishing area closures, gear and vessel restrictions, and other control measures expressed by the public during the scoping meetings. At its 122nd meeting, the Council endorsed the range of options and asked that alternatives be further developed including an analysis of each option. At the 123rd meeting, the Council may take initial action on a preferred alternative and direct staff to develop an amendment to the Bottomfish FMP that may be considered for final action at the 124th meeting in October 2004.

Although non-emergency issues not contained in this agenda may come before the Council for discussion, those issues may not be the subject of formal Council action during this meeting. Council action will be restricted to those issues specifically listed in this document and any issue arising after publication of this document that requires emergency action under section 305(c) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, provided the public has been notified of the Council's intent to take final action to address the emergency.

Special Accommodations

These meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Kitty M. Simonds, (808)522-8220 (voice) or (808)522-8226 (fax), at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: May 17, 2004.

Galen R. Tromble,
Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.
[FR Doc. 04-11580 Filed 5-20-04; 8:45 am]
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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 041304B]

Endangered Species; File No. 1260

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

ACTION: Issuance of permit modification.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the NMFS Southeast Region (SER) has been issued a modification to scientific research Permit No. 1260.

ADDRESSES: The modification and related documents are available for review upon written request or by appointment in the following office: Permits, Conservation and Education Division, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 13705, Silver Spring, MD 20910; phone (301)713-2289; fax (301)713-0376.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Patrick Opay or Ruth Johnson, (301)713-2289.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On March 1, 2004, notice was published in the **Federal Register** (69 FR 9596) that a modification of Permit No. 1260, issued June 29, 2001 (66 FR 34621), had been requested by the above-named organization. The requested modification has been granted under the authority of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) and the regulations governing the taking, importing, and exporting of endangered and threatened species (50 CFR 222-226).

The modification authorizes the permit holder to take an additional 14 loggerhead and 6 Kemp's ridley sea turtles annually, and adds an annual take authorization of 9 leatherback, 6 green and 6 hawksbill sea turtles to the permit. Turtles will be handled, flipper tagged and measured after they have been captured during fishery resource assessment cruises, and then released. The modification does not cover the incidental capture of the sea turtles, which is authorized separately in the biological opinion relating to the authorization of the assessment cruises.

Issuance of this modification, as required by the ESA was based on a

finding that such permit (1) was applied for in good faith, (2) will not operate to the disadvantage of the endangered species which is the subject of this permit, and (3) is consistent with the purposes and policies set forth in section 2 of the ESA.

Dated: May 14, 2004.

Stephen L. Leathery,

Chief, Permits, Conservation and Education Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 04-11581 Filed 5-20-04; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 050604A]

Endangered Species; File No. 1475

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

ACTION: Receipt of application.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Florida Marine Research Institute (Richard E. Matheson, Principal Investigator), 1481 Market Circle, Unit 1, Port Charlotte, FL 33953, has applied in due form for a permit to take smalltooth sawfish (*Pristis pectinata*) for purposes of scientific research.

DATES: Written, telefaxed, or e-mail comments must be received on or before June 21, 2004.

ADDRESSES: The application and related documents are available for review upon written request or by appointment in the following office(s):

Permits, Conservation and Education Division, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 13705, Silver Spring, MD 20910; phone (301)713-2289; fax (301)713-0376; and Southeast Region, NMFS, 9721 Executive Center Drive North, St. Petersburg, FL 33702-2432; phone (727)570-5301; fax (727)570-5320.

Written comments or requests for a public hearing on this application should be mailed to the Chief, Permits, Conservation and Education Division, F/PR1, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 13705, Silver Spring, MD 20910. Those individuals requesting a hearing should set forth the specific reasons why a hearing on this particular request would be appropriate.

Comments may also be submitted by facsimile at (301)713-0376, provided

the facsimile is confirmed by hard copy submitted by mail and postmarked no later than the closing date of the comment period.

Comments may also be submitted by e-mail. The mailbox address for providing email comments is *NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov*. Include in the subject line of the e-mail comment the following document identifier: File No. 1475.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Jennifer Jefferies or Jill Lewandowski, (301)713-2289.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The subject permit is requested under the authority of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) and the regulations governing the taking, importing, and exporting of endangered and threatened species (50 CFR 222-226).

The purpose of the project is to conduct research and monitoring on smalltooth sawfish in the State of Florida, especially the Charlotte Harbor estuarine system where sawfish are known to frequent. Researchers would characterize habitat use, relative abundance, juvenile recruitment, and temporal and spatial distributions of this species through the following research methodologies: capture via seines, hook and line and gillnets, measure, genetic sampling, PIT and rototagging and release of 135 juvenile and 65 adult smalltooth sawfish throughout the state of Florida. In addition, a subset of 25 juveniles and 25 adults would also have acoustic tags attached, and a subset of 10 juveniles and 15 adults would also have satellite tags attached. The researchers are requesting authorization for these activities for five years.

Dated: May 17, 2004.

Stephen L. Leathery,

Chief, Permits, Conservation and Education Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 04-11582 Filed 5-20-04; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-S

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Office of the Secretary

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

ACTION: Notice.

The Department of Defense has submitted to OMB for clearance, the following proposal for collection of information under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35).

DATES: Consideration will be given to all comments received by June 21, 2004.

Title and OMB Number: Revitalizing Base Closure Communities, Economic Development Conveyance Annual Financial Statement; OMB Number 0790-0004.

Type of Request: Extension.

Number of Respondents: 79.

Responses per Respondent: 1.

Annual Responses: 79.

Average Burden per Response: 40 hours.

Annual Burden Hours: 3,160.

Needs and Uses: The information collection requirement is necessary to verify that Local Redevelopment Authority (LRA) recipients of no-cost Economic Development Conveyances (EDCs) are in compliance with the requirement that the LRA reinvest proceeds from the use of EDC property for seven years. Respondents are LRAs that have executed no-cost EDC agreements with a Military Department that transferred property from a closed military installation. As provided by Section 2821(a)(3)(B)(i) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000 (Pub. L. 106-65), such agreements require that the LRA reinvest the proceeds from any sale, lease or equivalent use of EDC property (or any portion thereof) during at least the first seven years after the date of the initial transfer of the property to support the economic redevelopment of, or related to, the installation. The Secretary of Defense may recoup from the LRA such portion of these proceeds not used to support the economic redevelopment of, or related to, the installation. LRAs are subject to this same seven-year reinvestment requirement if their EDC agreement is modified to reduce the debt owed to the Federal Government. Military Departments monitor LRA compliance with this provision by requiring an annual financial statement certified by an independent Certified Public Accountant. No specific form is required.

Affected Public: Not-for-profit institutions; State, Local or Tribal Government.

Frequency: Annually.

Respondent's Obligation: Required to Obtain or Retain Benefits.

OMB Desk Officer: Ms. Jacqueline Zeiher.

Written comments and recommendations on the proposed information collection should be sent to Ms. Zeiher at the Office of Management and Budget, Desk Officer for DoD, Room 10236, New Executive Office Building, Washington, DC 20503.